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# *The South Sea Shilling*

VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN COOK, R.N.

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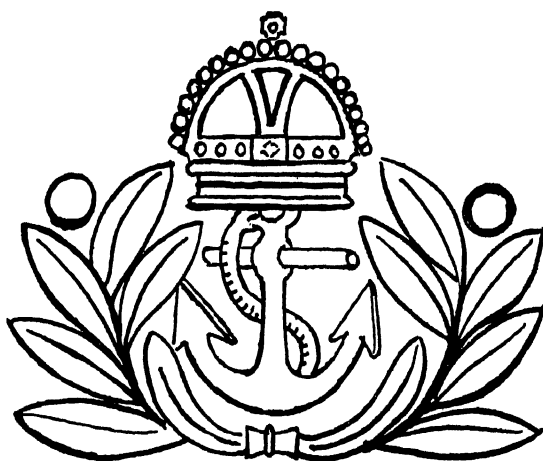
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# *The South Sea Shilling*

VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN COOK, R.N.

*by Eric Swenson*



*Illustrated by Charles Michael Daugherty*

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To  
J.P.S.M.S.

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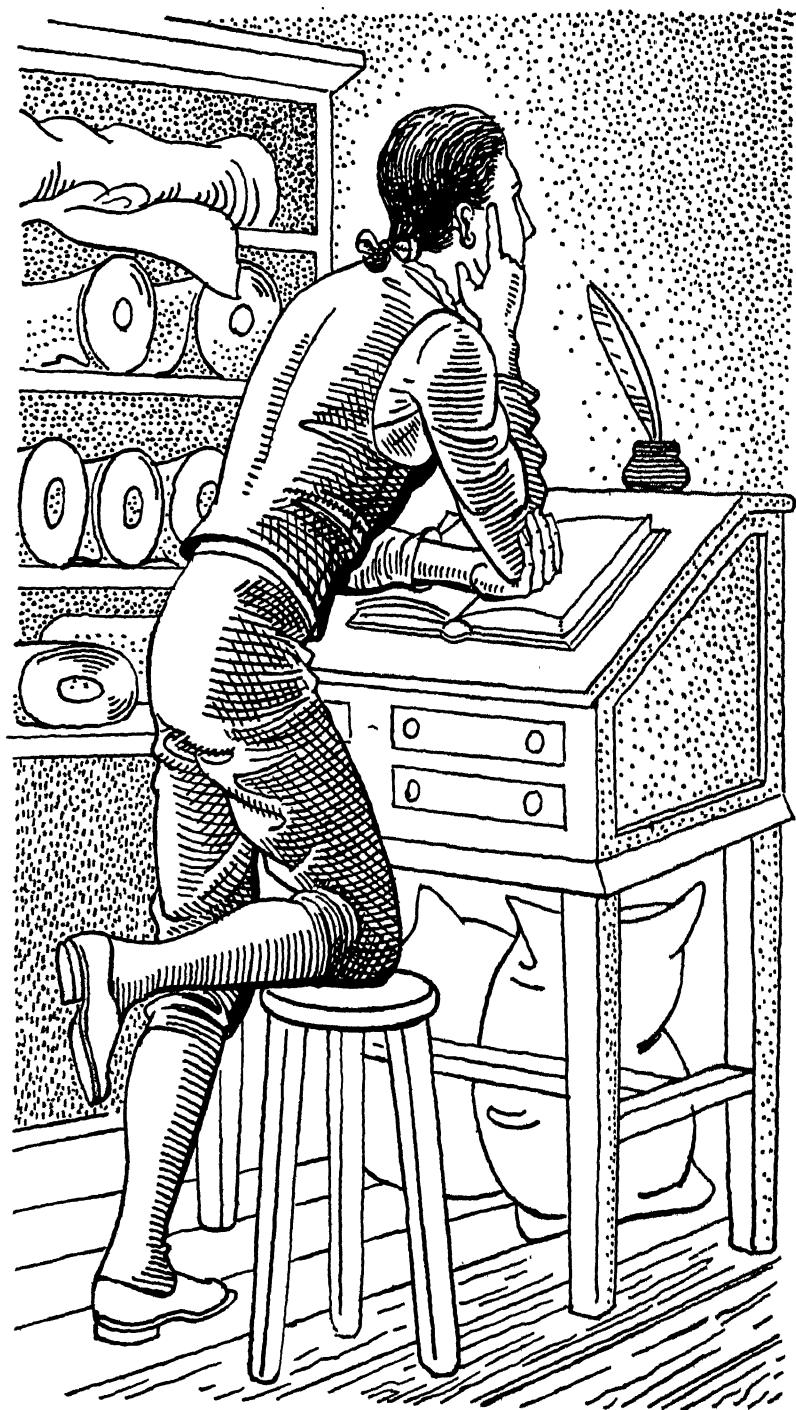
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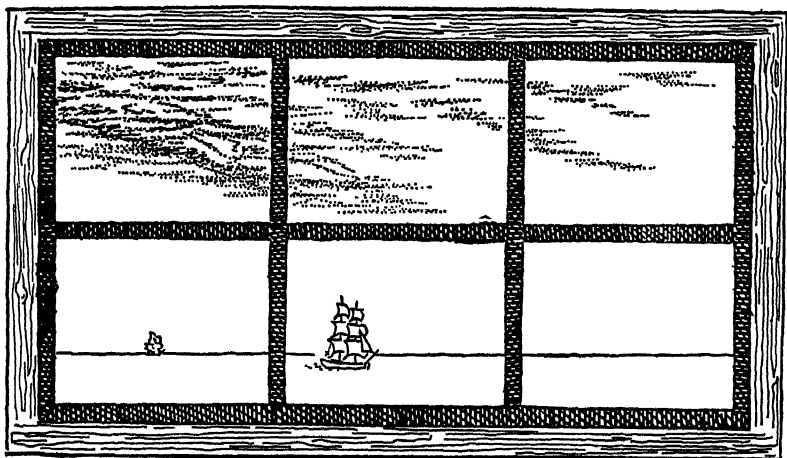
# *The South Sea Shilling*

VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN COOK, R.N.

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## *I. The South Sea Shilling*

In the little village of Staithes, on the northern coast of England about two hundred sailing miles from London, a young man found himself in trouble. He was James Cook, eighteen years old, helper in Mr. Saunderson's combined grocery and haberdashery shop.

Young Cook had been in the same kind of trouble before. It seemed he couldn't keep his mind on sacks of meal and fancy cuffs. It wasn't that his head was thick. On the contrary, he had taught himself his numbers well enough to help in keeping up accounts. He was a bright lad who learned quickly for all his mud-hut childhood and farm-country schooling.

What made Mr. Saunderson angry was that young Cook would have made a fine helper if he hadn't turned his eyes to the sea and his ears to the tales of North Sea fishermen. When he should have been dusting off shelves of woollens and opening

up the shop for early morning customers, he was staring through a window, watching sailing ships from Whitby standing off the coast. When he should have been counting the coins in the till, he was down at the foot of the street, listening to sailors' tales of far-off lands and strange adventures of the sea.

James Cook was young and he was smart. But he was stubborn too. He had been stubborn in the days when he had told his schoolmates that he knew better ways to go after birds' nests. And he was stubborn now. He was no haberdasher's helper and he didn't intend to stay one, once he found a way to get aboard a square-rigged ship.

What caused the final trouble between young Cook and Saunderson was a shilling. To James shillings were usually just something that had to be counted and entered in the ledger before he could close the door behind him and run with his long-legged strides to the docks at the bottom of the lane. But this time, Mr. Saunderson said, he had stolen a coin.

James said no, he had made a trade: a dirty silver shilling from his pocket for one in the till. He didn't care tuppence, he claimed, for any coin but that one. It was one of the shiny new South Sea shillings.

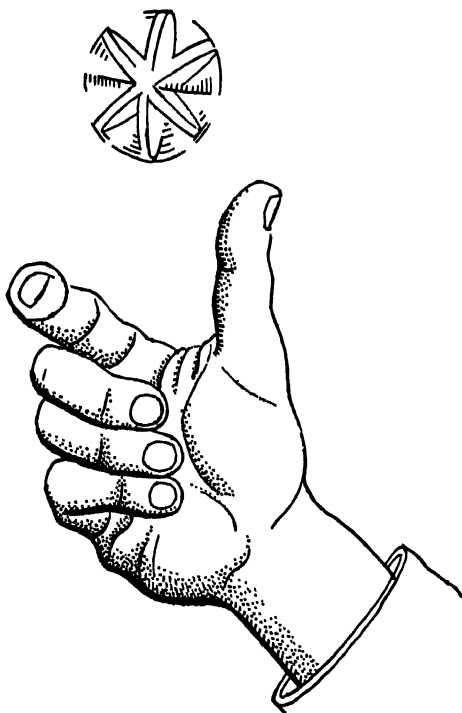
So the squabble began. Before it was over Mr. Saunderson, a kindly man at heart, realized two things: that young Cook had a temper and that young Cook would never remain a helper in any haberdashery on the Yorkshire coast, much less in Mr. Saunderson's.

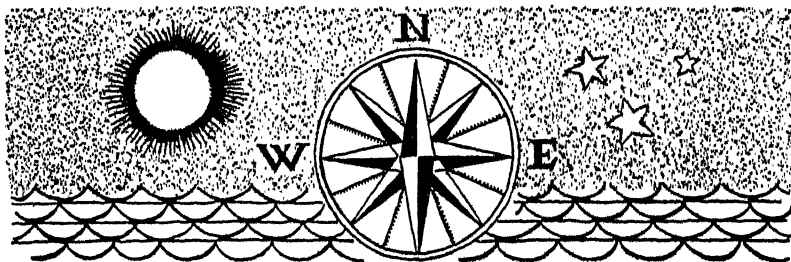
Not long after the affair of the shilling Mr. Saunderson took James Cook to see a friend in the port of Whitby. The friend was John Walker, owner of a fleet of trading ships that sailed up the coast and out to North Sea countries. He took a look at James and heard Mr. Saunderson say that the boy was not

the right cut for a haberdasher and had a strong hankering for ships and sails and charts and for stars above a mast.

Mr. Walker liked James Cook's slim, six-foot frame and fine-cut features. He liked the quick and piercing eyes; and he liked what he was told about the boy teaching himself numbers. So he took James Cook as his apprentice and sent him before the mast on the coastal collier *Freelove*.

It might be said that Cook first went to sea because of a shiny shilling. And it might be said that he went because he had watched the ships from the window and talked to the sailors in Staithes; and because he knew what he wanted, and got it, in a restless, stubborn, strong-minded way.





## II. *A Wild New World*

It was 1746 when James Cook sailed from Whitby on his first ship, the *Freelove*.

The seventeen hundreds were not so long ago, as historians count the years; but half the earth and half the seas were a wild new world. Across the Atlantic, America was a land where Indians lifted the scalps of French and English settlers who wandered too far in the forests beyond their eastern colony farms. The Pacific Ocean was still a vast, uncharted wilderness of water, where voyagers rattled the ribs of their wooden ships on coral reefs and discovered the empty spaces of their world.

The sun, the stars, and the man-made compass were the stop, the go, and turning signs that led brave men into unknown lands and across unknown seas. Makers of charts and globes were filling the naked spaces between the outlines of a continent and the borders of a sphere.

Old men of England thought of colonies and empire, of quick and easy routes northwest to the priceless trade of China. Old men of France thought of garrisons and furs along the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, and up in Hudson's Bay.

Young men throughout Europe thought of strange new

lands, of leaving home to found an empire and find the northern route. They thought of tall masts, broad sails, and long voyages; of scurvy, fever, storms, and ice along Magellan's passage to the western seas. Then they hauled on their hal-yards, heaved up their anchors, and set their sails. Some were visionary; some were greedy. Some were brave; some were cowards. All were restless. Among them they carried the strength and weakness of an old continent over the curve of the earth to a wide new world.

Fo'c'sle life went well with Cook. He climbed the ratlines, took in sail, and found what a northern wind can be. He studied the stars and learned their names, so he could find his way where no milestones pointed a route.

After the *Freelove*, three more ships carried him on a rough North Sea and into Baltic ports. In nine years he grew tough as iron, and rose from ordinary seaman to master's mate on board the new bark *Friendship*. His career seemed straight as a line of longitude; but there came a time when it bent to the west because men were building forts three thousand miles away.

On the American shore, from Virginia in the South and Massachusetts in the North, English farmers pushed their colonies inland to Appalachian Mountain country. From Canada, Frenchmen scattered south, trading muskets to tribes of Indians as they went. English woodsmen moving west and French hunters moving south met in the depths of the forests. At first they moved around each other and maintained a snarling peace, like a pair of circling wolves. Each side claimed the land as a colony for his king. Each argued about his right of way on the unmarked wilderness road. Arguments led to fights. Frenchmen died of British bullets, and France sent powder

and guns to the Indians for raids on English towns. Battles grew, spread from frontier lines, and in 1756 became a war which was fought for seven years in the American colonies and on the sea, wherever French and English met.

When the news of war with France arrived in England, the *Friendship* was anchored in the Thames, below the city of London. In her cabin, under the swinging lamp, Cook, the master's mate, sat talking to her owner, John Walker, who had come to offer Cook a job. He had a new ship for the Norway trade and he wanted Cook to be her master. He would be the youngest master, Walker said, in all the merchant fleet.

Cook sat straight in his chair and said thank you, no. Up and down the coast of England, in the ports of Deptford, Spithead, Bristol, Plymouth, and here in the narrows of the river Thames, the Royal Navy was shaking off its mildew and oiling its guns for war. The time had come for him to change his plans. Men were needed to cast off the mooring cables, heave the sounding leads, pass the powder, and drink the grog of King George III's war-bound fleet. They'd warm their rum on red-hot guns, said Cook, before the year was out. And they'd need it warm when winter found them chopping ice from the shrouds off the New France coast.

Mr. Walker looked at Cook. He saw the same tall frame he had seen before, the same sharp eyes, and he knew that the stubborn young boy had become a stubborn young man. Without much hope he talked to Cook; he told him that no one else had risen so fast or would go so far, if he stayed in the merchant trade. He said that the Navy took its officers from schools, and its masters grew up in the fleet. They'd take him out of the cabin, he said, with its chairs, brass lamps, and sunny ports; and they'd put him before the mast again. The position



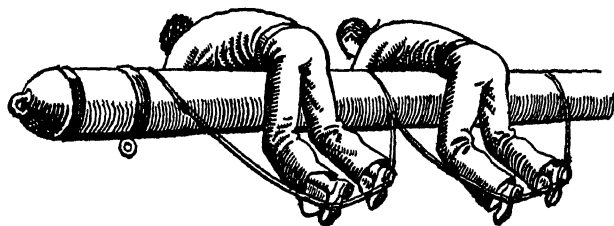
he had earned by nine years' work would be lost in a day.

But Mr. Walker, like Mr. Saunderson before him, saw that Cook knew what he wanted to do. He said no more, except good-by and godspeed.

Cook left the *Friendship* in the Thames and posted up to Wapping, where he knew of a rendezvous for Navy volunteers. There he enlisted as an able-bodied seaman on His Majesty's Ship *Eagle*. He no longer slept in a bunk or studied his books at a teakwood table. Four hundred men swung their hammocks on decks that carried the weight of sixty guns, he among them.

Thirty-seven days after he joined the fleet Cook proved that Mr. Walker was wrong. His nine years on the North Sea were not lost in a day. He had served his time before the mast; he knew his stars and charts and when to take in sail in a blow. He knew his way from sprit to transom, from topmast hounds to deadwood planks. One thing more he knew: that the muster sheets of the fleet were far from filled and ships of war needed experienced hands. And the captain of the *Eagle* saw that there was a sailor on his ship who could handle sails and men.

So James Cook, onetime haberdasher's helper of Staithes, recent mate of a trading ship and seaman of the Navy, became mate to Mr. Bisset, master of the *Eagle*. His only trading henceforth would be lead for lead in the war with France.





### *III. Battle down the River*

On a black, death-still night in June of 1759, a few miles down the St. Lawrence River from the French fortress city of Quebec, the English fleet was landing troops on an island. James Cook stood near the wheel of his ship and watched soldiers going over the side. They moved silently, though they were carrying heavy packs, down the swaying ladders to unseen boats in the darkness below.

Three years had passed since Cook had signed aboard H.M.S. *Eagle* at Wapping. In that time he had become a first-class Navy man, with three men-of-war on his Admiralty record. He had worked and studied and fought, in his determined way, until he had earned a warrant as master of His Majesty's Ship-of-the-Line *Pembroke*. Now he stood on her deck and listened to muttered commands and the occasional thud of musket stocks on oaken thwarts in the boats. He knew why the men were silent and why no lights were showing.

Cook turned and looked toward the shore where the French might be. But the river was smothered in an unstarred, motionless night. He felt damp in the breathless air and would have shivered, had he been a shivering man.

He understood that the three years of Navy life behind him had been only a time of training for battles to come. The attack on Quebec would be the first. No trouble so far. But the night was too black and too still.

Then trouble came with a slashing storm when only half the men were ashore. A gale of wind and blinding rain swung down the river and caught them unprepared. Cook shouted the order to double the cable, and the *Pembroke* held at her anchor. But off to starboard he heard a chain part with a roar and saw the dim shape of a transport swerve and drift toward the beach with the squall at her stern.

He wasted no time pondering but called away his cutter and sent her off to haul the drifting transport to. The men caught her just before she beached and had her back in line by the time the rain let up. Not the kind of man who sighs his relief, Cook turned aft again to direct the disembarking men.

Suddenly, down the river, sheets of flame and rocketing streams of burning powder punched red and yellow holes in the storm-black night. Cook knew what had happened.

The enemy had been watching and had seen the storm interrupt the well-ordered landing. They had timed their attack well. Fireboats, loaded with powder, shells, tinder, and wood, were floating with the current, down on the British ships.

Cook thought for an instant of the troops still crowding his deck. Most of them were green fantassins, wearing their first gaiters and infantry breeches. They were brave enough and trained for a marching, slogging, foot-soldier kind of fight. But flames on a windy river at night meant fireboats and a danger new to Army men. On the *Pembroke* the troops cried out and excitedly moved on deck. But they did no more than that, because they heard Cook's voice as he called above the wind, "In

the *Pembroke* cutter! Pull for the nearest fire—off the star-board bow. Get to windward and heave your grapple. Tow the fireboat to the midstream channel and let it go where it'll drift on past."

The masters on the other seven ships followed Cook's example. Strong arms heaved on many oars in the path of the flaring light. The boats were caught before their fires had seared the planks of a single ship or smoldered a single line. And though there were many blackened faces and many eyebrows singed, by midnight all seven fireboats had been towed beyond the fleet. They burned until five in the morning and made a fine show of fireworks as the last troops went ashore.

The French had failed to stop the English landing on Orleans Island, three leagues down from Quebec. But it was more than two months before the British Army arrived at the city. Meanwhile Cook came close to losing his scalp.

The fleet bombarded the shore by day; at dark Cook went out to sound for channels and lay out buoys in the treacherous hollows of the enemy river. On the blackest nights he rowed a small boat into channels and bays under the invisible sights of French guns. Cook of the *Pembroke* and Bisset, friend of his days on the *Eagle*, sounded and marked the way for the day when their ships would carry English troops to the shore.

One evening, when the work was almost done, Cook was shackling new buoys to old lines off the upstream point of Orleans Island. Bisset was a mile away, sounding the inshore channel. The French were near, but the night was dark and Orleans Island was a British camp.

The boat rocked quietly under him as he leaned over its side. He pushed the eye of an anchored cable into the grip of an

iron shackle and rammed home the pin that held the buoy in place. In the darkness he worked by the feel of his hands. The bight of the shackle was narrow, the pin a tight fit. The current that flowed through the night from Quebec put tension between buoy and line. Before he cast off he leaned over the gun'l to inspect his work.

It seemed secure. He stretched far out to heave the buoy free. As he turned to throw he stopped and held himself still, every muscle frozen hard. A shadow, darker than the night, moved past the stern of his boat. Then another went by. In those shadows Indians lay on the bottoms of long canoes. They dipped no paddles as they came but let the river carry them quietly downstream.

Without a sound Cook lowered the buoy into the water and crouched to his oars. Then, with a shout, which he hoped would carry to Bisset, to keep himself clear, he pulled toward Orleans Island. There, he knew, British sentries paced the shore.

The answering cry was not from Bisset. It came in the whoop and screech of a human eagle across the black river night. It came from the Indians as they rose to their knees and dug long-bladed paddles into the water.

Cook pulled on his oars with sweeping, powerful strokes. Water sighed as it broke on the bow and rushed past the sides of his boat. But birch canoes float high. Under the force of deep-drawn paddles in the hands of St. Lawrence Indians, they skimmed the river like swallows at sunset.

The race ran silently now. Cook strained for the shore while the Indians bowed the hafts of their paddles to overtake him before he could land. Facing aft as he rowed, Cook never turned to look for the beach; he knew that part of the river as he knew the streets of Staithes.

The first canoe was ten yards away and closing in fast. He could see its dim shape grow larger as the gap between them grew small. Suddenly a faint red glow was reflected on an Indian shoulder, and Cook knew that an English campfire was at his back, not far from the bow of his boat.

The canoe crept closer; the red glow grew brighter. Cook threw the last of his strength to his oars. There was a yard between them now. He could see the crook of an arm reach for the stern of his boat. He gave a great heave to move from its grasp and felt his oars scrape stone. He leaped from his seat and sprang from the boat as it rasped on the rocky beach. For the second time an Indian cry rushed through the night. Cook turned and saw four canoes sweep toward the shore. In his stranded boat a flame-lit figure danced from thwart to thwart.

He crouched again and ran low toward the trees. Others, too, had heard the whoop and shout, for musket blast roared out of the dark and was echoed by further shots.

Before the Indians slipped away they burned his boat to the waterline, but Cook was breathing free again and telling English soldiers that shots had never roared so fine a welcome and powder had never smelled so sweet.

For two months after Cook's escape he watched and waited with a thousand men. Once they attacked at Beauport, below Quebec, and were driven back, their dead abandoned on the riverbank. Most bitter of all was the waiting for supplies that never came. Their rations almost gone, they worked on empty bellies while black flies stabbed at their flesh.

Each day Cook sailed from the *Pembroke* past his marker buoys and bombarded the fort at Quebec. Each night he lit the swinging lamp in his cabin and worked on his charts. He told no



man the thoughts that followed his pen as it traced the channels, rocks, islands, and bays. He knew the charts were good, but they would serve no purpose when winter ice rolled back the current and drove the fleet from the river. The French would be laughing, he felt, at the English who pecked like chickens at the base of the bluff below their city.

In September a plan was made. Cook helped carry the troops across the river again, away from the town. They marched upstream in the woods along the south shore until, on a day clear as polished glass, they boarded a squadron of ships and sailed beyond the town, as though to attack its upstream lines of supply.

While daylight lasted, the English sailed with clattering chains, fluttering colors, shouts, and rounds of shot fired at an empty forest. From fortified heights the enemy watched, felt secure, and forgot there would be no moon that night. When darkness came, the squadron turned and lowered its boats. Silently over the sides climbed half the English Army. Their boats took the current and drifted down on Quebec.

The *Pembroke* was in the basin below the city, making loud hoorah and cannonading to keep the Frenchmen's eyes away from the boats coming down the river. Between the flashes of his guns Cook looked at the night. The darkness was perfect; as black, he thought, as the bilges of a Newcastle collier.

Below the city's cliffs, on a narrow beach, British troops landed at four in the morning. They climbed a narrow trail to the Heights of Abraham and waited for day.

When the French yawned and stretched and reached for their boots in the morning, enemy troops stood on the plain outside their gates. The French snatched up their guns and went out to fight for the city, their unbuttoned tunics flapping as they ran.

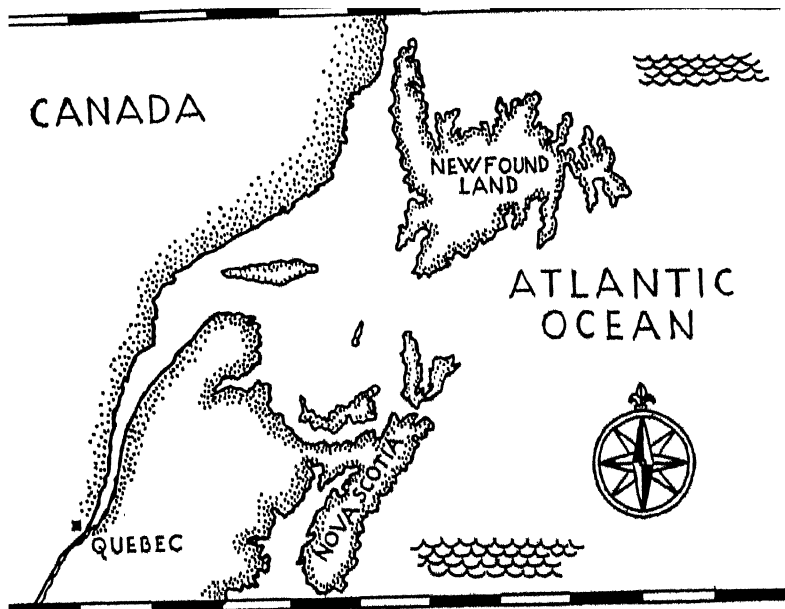


In a ten-minute battle a victory was won that cracked the seams of New World France. Later, with gusty howls of laughter, soldiers told sailors how the enemy had broken and fled, with British steel spurring them on from behind.

Among the thousand blows that drove the English wedge between France and its New World lands, Cook's was almost unheard. But it changed again the course of his career. In a land that lay blank on British charts, he had taken sights, marked his soundings, and explored to find a course for ships that carried soldiers to battle. Men of the fleet read his name on the charts they used to sail the river.

One of those who knew what Cook had done was Lord Colville, captain of H.M.S. *Northumberland* and second in command of the British fleet. So it was that ten days after the city fell Cook stood on the *Northumberland's* quarterdeck and heard the news that his life on the *Pembroke* was over. The fleet would leave the river soon and make for winter quarters at Halifax to the south. Colville would be in command; the *Northumberland* would be his flagship. There were special orders, Colville said, for taking bearings, observations, and soundings, and for the exploration of the New World coast. Cook had shown what he could do when it came to making charts, and though he was young for the job, he became master of the *Northumberland*, to help carry out the orders.

Cook returned to the *Pembroke*, packed his chest, gathered his books and papers, and said good-by to his men. He stood near the ladder that led to the boat and wondered at the instant of sadness that swept over him. Then he shook hands with his mate and climbed down the side. The master of the *Pembroke* was now master of a flagship, and navigator, surveyor, and explorer for His Majesty's North American Fleet.



## *IV. On Soundings*

When the war ended the conquerors looked around to see what they had conquered. Now, more than men-of-war or armies, they needed charts and maps. They needed knowledge of the land they ruled. So Cook became surveyor, explorer, and maker of charts. On winter nights in Halifax harbor, when snow and ice shrouded ships in white and locked the fleet in the bay, Cook studied the books of his new profession.

Young James Cook of Staithes had taught himself numbers to keep accounts of shillings and pence. James Cook of His Majesty's Fleet in Halifax dug deep into the infinite knowledge of higher mathematics and learned more of the stars and planets than a sailor needs to know to stay a sailor. He learned to

use a transit in measuring land and space. He calculated time and observed the moon eclipse the sun. He measured his world in hours, minutes, seconds, and angles relative to a given line, relative to time, relative to England, and relative to man.

In the springs, summers, and early autumns of eight years after the capture of Quebec in 1759, Cook sailed off the Canadian shore, master of the schooner *Grenville*. His lead sampled the bottom of the sea from Halifax to St. John's, from northeast harbors to far northern bays. His cruising ground touched a wilderness that was a little French, a little Indian, but mostly unknown rivers, forests, and rocky coasts, which became English land by the doubtful right of shot, ships, and muscular men.

He made six winter trips to England. Home from the war, he had been a fighting man who rested and visited his friends. In Whitby he drank tankards of ale with John Walker and told him about the St. Lawrence River, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia.

Now home from foreign ports, he was a navigator who sent descriptions and charts to Admiralty desks. Lord Colville had written an official letter that said:

Sir: Mr. Cook, late master of the *Northumberland*, acquaints me that he has laid before their Lordships all his draughts and observations relating to the coast of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

On this occasion I beg to inform their Lordships that from my experience of Mr. Cook's genius and capacity, I think him well qualified for the work he has performed and for greater undertakings of the same kind. These draughts being made under my own eye, I can venture to say they may be the means of directing many in the right way, but cannot mislead any. I am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

Colville.

It was not that Cook had become a generally famous man; but reports of what he had done and could do had begun to rise

like rumors through chinks and crannies in the ranks of lords and scientists. In a time of exploration he was an explorer. In a time when colonies were being founded he helped win new land and stretch the boundaries of knowledge.

Each voyage brought Cook more recognition. He was known as a self-taught, silent man who planned for the future. His silence was conspicuous, but it smashed to fiery fragments when his plans, his ship, or his crew were threatened.

Once, when their ship lay in Deptford harbor, waiting for the tide, Cook's men were startled to see a merchant collier swerve from the channel and foul her sprit in the *Grenville's* anchor cable. Like a giant snap-the-whip the collier swung on the submerged line, crashed broadside into the motionless schooner, and locked rigging and spars in a furious tangle.

Cook's men were even more startled to hear a bellowing roar from their usually silent commander. It was a roar that cleared the wreckage in record time and brought the collier's master up the *Greenville's* side, over the rail, and aft to Cook's quarterdeck with the speed of a deer flushed from hiding by the blast of a gun.

Fully expecting to be cut into strips, salted and packed as bully beef for a Navy dinner, the master of the collier climbed the deckhouse ladder and stood near the *Grenville's* wheel. Not another sound escaped Cook's throat. He was staring at the bewildered face of an old friend of his country-school days.

The only bully beef prepared that day was for the meal that Cook served his friend. Between food and ale in the cabin, they talked of bird-nesting days in Yorkshire and told each other tales of the sea.

Although his wrath had changed to laughter, Cook had

proved two facts to his men. For hours the watch below discussed the day, as sailing men have a habit of doing when their trick is over. They allowed that Mr. Cook was a quiet man; but when his temper broke through it was a shattering force. A man had best be somewhere else when it happened, one said. Each asked the other if he had noticed how the master's soft voice had risen strong and clear above the crack of splintering Norwegian spruce spars and the explosion of parting shrouds.

It had been an accident that showed his men something of the man who commanded them. But it did not show them everything. For all that Cook was a stubborn, rock-ribbed succeder, he was also a warmhearted man. On his trips to England he proved that he was more than a fighter, a navigator, a comer, a doer, a salt-hardened master. He was also a happy, typical sailor ashore.

Like sailors of all times, he met a girl. She was Elizabeth Batts of Shadwell and Barking. Bright and pretty, she turned her eyes toward the tall, strong-looking mariner. For once James Cook did not stop for sounding and chart-making. Without preparation, he fell in love. As though homing on a beacon light, he courted young Bess of Barking, taking advantage of every whimsical shift of the breezes and currents in her heart.

Cook proved that he could move swiftly when his cause was sufficient. In six weeks' time he met, loved, and won his wife. Though it meant lonely months and years of waiting while he was at sea, Bess married James Cook, King's Surveyor, Master Mariner, impressive young personage, and man of action. She married him because he was a handsome, love-smitten sailor and because she loved him. The vicar of Barking performed the ceremony in the county of Essex, three months before Cook sailed again for the Canadian coast.

Five years later, the *Grenville* arrived off Newfoundland for the last time. Cook's North American explorations were nearly completed. His earlier charts had been published and praised, his name was well known to admirals, but there was trouble to come before his work would be finished.

He put off from the *Grenville* in the cutter to survey a river mouth near Noddy's Harbor in Newfoundland. For two days his work went smoothly. With a party of men from the ship he moved along the shore, pitching camp at night on the river-bank and hunting game to add to the rations they carried in the cutter. On the third day, as they edged their boat along the bank, taking soundings and sights, the man in the bow saw a buck in the bushes to their left. With thoughts of venison at evening, Cook reached for his powder flask with his right hand and for his musket with his left. He crouched to load. Suddenly a companion fired past his shoulder. The blast drove flaming gun-wadding to Cook's right. With a hissing flash his flask exploded in his hand.

No one was killed and, by luck, Cook's face escaped the flame. But when he raised his right arm he saw that his hand was a torn, bloody mass, his thumb almost ripped from his wrist. His men wrapped his arm in strips of a torn-up shirt and twisted a tourniquet tight above his elbow. Then they turned the cutter toward the *Grenville*. Cook held his arm in the air to slow the flow of blood. He was silent except to say it was odd that he should sail safely through a war, then blow his hand half off while shooting a deer for dinner.

What caused him quiet, painful laughter, however, was that he had fought that war against the French without the need of any doctor; and now that his thumb dangled by its roots the

only one who could help him was the surgeon of a French ship that lay in Noddy's Harbor.

It took time for the *Grenville* to reach the French man-of-war. To Cook time was pain. His hand throbbed and burned against the cloth that bound it. Every wave that struck the schooner's bow pounded the shattered nerves in his hand. But to his men the only sign of his hurt was that he broke his usual silence.

He even laughed and told his mate the tale of the South Sea shilling that had sent him to sea. When the wind fell low and slowed their way, he joked about old sailors who scratched the mast and whistled for a breeze. For some time to come, he declared, he'd do most of his scratching with his left hand.

When they arrived at Noddy's Harbor, the French doctor stripped the cloth from Cook's arm, gave him a drink of grog to swallow, told him to grit his teeth on an oaken marlin spike, and seared the open wound with a red-hot iron. To seal the flesh from dirt, the doctor poured on boiling pitch and bound it tight with a clean flannel bandage.

The agony ended in a few hours' time. In a few weeks he could use his hand for light work. In a month it was well. But for the rest of his life Cook bore a deep white scar from wrist-bone to the web of his thumb.



## *V. Storm*

With his hand still wrapped in flannel and his arm in a sling, Cook took the *Grenville* back to her work. By the autumn of 1767 his charts were drawn, his soundings marked, his reports complete. He sailed his ship from the southern shore of Newfoundland on his last voyage across the North Atlantic. He was headed for home, his family, and rest from his work on New World coasts.

They crossed the ocean without trouble and, on November 9, arrived off the port of Deal. But on the tenth, as they beat up the straits toward Ramsgate, heavy weather rose from the east.



Flat, gray clouds climbed the sky on a rising wind. By four in the afternoon squalls tossed the ship in a slow and clumsy dance. Her timbers groaned as she beat ponderously to the music of a quickening storm.

Cook stood with his legs apart, his feet braced against cleats on the slippery deck. He looked aloft and saw spars straining and heard rigging whining in the gale. He looked down the wind and saw a shore where ledges of rock boiled in the surf. Then he took a sight from the mainmast to North Foreland's point and watched while its angle closed toward the bow. It told him what he had to know. Though the *Grenville* plowed a furrow of foam through the water, she was losing ground. Wind, waves, and current were carrying her astern toward the place where the Channel bottom shelved upward and rose from the sea at the foot of high, spray-swept bluffs.

Cook turned and shouted an order. Above the heavy crash of waves along the starboard side, above the falsetto wail of wind through the shrouds, men relayed the long, drawn-out cry along the deck. "Heave to! Take in all sail. Drop both anchors." The sound, thrown against the wind, hesitated on the air an instant, then blew to nothingness down the path of the gale.

For a time the ship rode on her cables, pitching and bucking like a wild horse on a tether. Then, as an early, cloud-filled darkness came on, a great comber struck under her stem. A wall of water climbed her rail and hissed across her deck, carrying men and gear into the scuppers. Cook felt his ship shudder and rear back until half her keel was clear of the water. Then she dived into the trough and dug her head into the next wind-torn sea. Under his feet he felt her lurch and fall off the wind.

A cable had parted under the strain, and the one remaining anchor was dragging through the bottom. English Channel

seas drove the ship toward a rocky berth on England's waiting beach. Cook just had time to remember that the shoal called Knock was to leeward before the other cable snapped. The *Grenville* grounded hard. In the darkness and in the gale she careened and lay on her side, trembling in a pounding sea.

Braced on the slanted deck, Cook roared orders into the night. All hatches were secured to keep waves from cascading between her decks. Her boats were hoisted out. Guns and gear were stripped from their chocks and heaved over the side. But light as they made her, she remained fast on the shoal.

By midnight half the larboard deck was under water. Cook realized that his ship might stay as she was or be smashed to bits, but she would not lift from the ledge until calmer seas and the morning tide helped them ease her free. He called the boats to take off his men. One by one they dropped from precarious perches, slipped and tumbled down the deck, and jumped to safety in the boats. When all were off, they pulled for Sheerness in the west.

Riding smaller seas near shore, they landed before the dawn. The master and crew of His Majesty's *Grenville*, in from Canadian waters, made port in a cutter, a pinnace, and a longboat.

The next day was fair and the flood tide full. Cook and his men returned to the battered schooner, took off her cargo, and floated her into deep water.

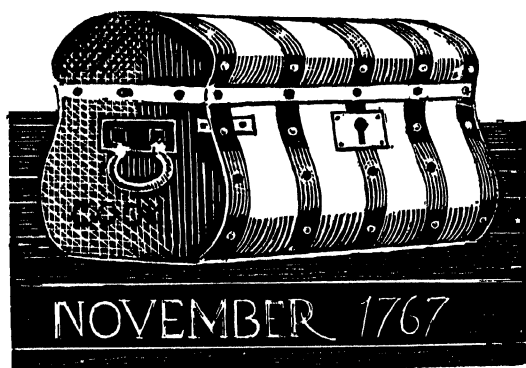
On November 15, 1767, the *Grenville* moored at Woolwich, a short haul down the river from London. Cook's North American duty was finished. He had been an apprentice haberdasher who had gone to sea and learned its ways and more. Now his apprenticeship was over. Among sailing men he was a man who knew how to command a ship and care for his crew. The Admiralty knew him as a leader who could be trusted to carry out

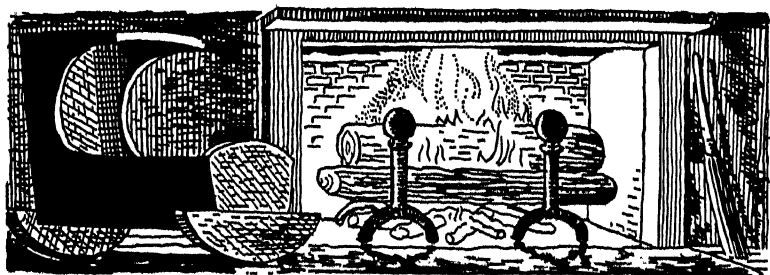
his missions. Scientists studied his work as a surveyor; his charts were true to the lay of a coast and the depth of a bay.

More than this, Cook had proved that he had eyes that recorded facts that stood before them while they searched horizons for unseen lands and the secrets of unknown space.

When Cook left the *Grenville* at Woolwich he sent his sea chest on ahead, packed with charts, books, navigator's instruments, and the little things a sailor collects. He was headed for Shadwell, where Bess was waiting.

He strode down a gangway that swung and danced beneath his steps. In his pocket a penny clinked against a shiny South Sea shilling.





## *VI. H.M.S. Endeavour*

In the town of Shadwell, James Cook was home with his family. In five years of marriage he had lived with Bess only a few scattered months on short visits home from Canada and Newfoundland. Now, it seemed, he had come to stay for a time. On the day he arrived Bess built him a fire in the long, deep chimney-place, sat him down before it, and showed him his family. It had grown while he had been away.

When he had seen young James and Nathaniel last they had been babies. Now James was four and Nathaniel three. He had to make friends with them all over again and tell them tales of adventures he had lived far from the world they knew. They jabbered like monkeys and played games of the sea. The hearth was their ship, the pot-hook and roasting spit its spars. And there in the cradle was the baby he had never seen, his daughter Elizabeth, born a few months before.

Bess watched him stand before the cradle, their baby hidden in the crook of his long arms, or before the hearth, showing his sons how to rig a topgallant to the leg of a table. She wondered how old the children would be when he left them again.

For more than six months Cook lived as most men lived and

as he had seldom lived since he had gone aboard his first ship at Whitby. At Christmas time he took Bess and the children to see his old father on the farm in Yorkshire. They hung mistletoe and sang the carols that English voices were singing in cottages and castles throughout the land. A great yule log, lighted on Christmas Eve, glowed, crackled, and fell into ash late on Christmas Day. And after the children were asleep James and Bess clinked their mugs of hot, sweet, spicy wine.

But while mulled wine simmered and mistletoe hung in the hall, Cook wondered what waters he would sail next. Events were moving in England and in the world, that would take him far from Bess, his children, and Shadwell.

The ways of men and nations were the same, that winter of 1767, as they always have been. The end of the war with France brought peace for a while, but peace was only a milestone in the endless race of nations for power, riches, and knowledge. In the ports of Spain, Portugal, France, and Holland, ships made ready to sail again for distant seas. There was much of the world to be taken by the first to find it.

England was a small country but her ways were mighty. Her farms produced more food than she needed. New steam engines drove flying shuttles across her looms and wove cloth for trade with three continents. Like a great river running between narrow banks, England's wealth and energy overflowed the boundaries of her islands and infant colonies. She needed new worlds to satisfy her dreams. The eyes of her men turned to the Pacific, the sea of unknown continents.

Trade and power were not the only reasons England looked toward the Pacific. Scientists were beginning to combine their knowledge, explore the mysteries of stars, examine life through powerful lenses, and uncover new facts about their world.

Some believed there was a continent in South Pacific seas. It had to be there, they claimed, to balance the weight of northern land and keep the world from turning head over heels or splitting in half as it spun on its axis.

Others said no. Captains Anson, Carteret, "Foul Weather Jack" Byron, and Wallis had sailed into the great southern sea and found nothing more than a few small islands, sun-whitened coral atolls, a race of handsome, happy people, and a thousand leagues of empty ocean. Besides, cried dignified men in stormy meetings, water was almost as heavy as land and could shift to balance the earth like a sack of meal on a miller's back.

They guessed, discussed, and disagreed. But together they decided one point. Someone should go and find out what was and what wasn't there.

One fact no scientist denied. In 1769, by their calculations, the planet Venus would pass across the face of the sun and cast its shadow on the earth. In France, Spain, and Russia men of science told one another that the transit of Venus was an important event. If astronomers watched the planet enter the light of the sun from many widely scattered posts on the earth, they could calculate, for the first time in the history of man, the distance from the world to the sun. By measuring the time of the transit, as seen from different parts of the globe, by calculating miles between astronomers' telescopes, by drawing imaginary triangles to the sun, they could twist and squeeze from a system of angles the knowledge they sought. They would not have a chance again for one hundred years.

It was a complicated idea to ordinary men, and it was no wonder that few understood what it was all about when the Royal Society of England petitioned the king to send a Navy

ship into the South Pacific in order to observe the transit of a planet across the sun. But King George III was the golden patron of science. He liked to see England ahead of the world in all matters—even if he didn't understand exactly what the scientists were after.

Besides, the Royal Society talked a language Navy men, ministers of government, and kings could understand when it talked about Pacific land for the British Empire. There were islands still unclaimed by Spain, Portugal, France, or Holland. There was territory to add to the one-eighth of the world that was already British. And more than islands, more than the movements of planets, there was something else to think about—if the king and his ministers needed more reasons to send a ship to southern seas. There was the possibility of discovering a continent.

If a South Sea scientific expedition should happen to find a great new continent, the cause of knowledge would be advanced. New planets, new animals, new minerals, new races of man might be found. And, of course, if that unknown continent should provide riches for the commerce of an empire, so much the better. It was enough to make curious men restless and greedy men lick their lips. Without hesitation everyone agreed. The expedition would be sent to the South Pacific.

Then everyone disagreed. Who was to command the expedition? Men of the Royal Society said it was to be a scientific voyage for scientific purposes. A scientist should command it. In fact, they pointed out, they had just the man for the job—Mr. Dalrymple.

Mr. Dalrymple knew where the continent was, he said. He had even drawn a chart of the unseen land and peopled it with races of men, inhabited it with strange fur-bearing animals,

planted it with lumber trees and fields of wheat, and loaded its rocks with valuable stones and metals. All this was in his imagination, of course, but he could prove it with theories and numbers and long, heavy words.

But when Mr. Dalrymple drew himself up and said that he must have command of the voyage, the lords of the Admiralty roared as though they had been stung by bees. It was to be a naval expedition, they said, in a Royal Navy ship. No one but an officer of the king's fleet was going to order a crew of Navy men around the world on a Navy ship.

One high lord had the final word. When he was asked to sign a warrant for Mr. Dalrymple as commander of the voyage, he shouted that he would cut off his hand before he would use it to sign a paper permitting anyone but a king's officer to command a ship of His Majesty's Navy.

Mr. Dalrymple stalked away, proclaiming his theories of the unseen continent and refusing to have anything more to do with the expedition. The matter was settled when a new leader was chosen. The Admiralty called on James Cook. He was a proved explorer, navigator, astronomer, commander of men, and above all a Navy man.

When he received the Admiralty's letter, Cook was with Bess and his children, enjoying his Christmas holiday. The message announced he was to be promoted to lieutenant and given command of the South Seas expedition. Bess knew that it would be long years before she would see him again. For months at a time she would not know whether his ship sailed toward the east or the west, or whether it lay on the bottom. But she also knew that a South Sea shilling still rubbed against the lining of her husband's pocket. When the time came she would help him pack his sea chest, as she had done before.



Cook had no theories about the southern continent. He had no favorite ideas to prove by going on the long voyage. When Royal Society members asked him what he thought of the theory, he said, "It is a question easy to answer. We will go and see if the continent is or is not there."

Long voyages into the Pacific were not new. Men had sailed into the uncharted ocean a hundred years and more before his time. Tasman of Holland had discovered the western shore of New Holland—later to be named Australia but then a wilderness drawn with one or two jagged lines on guesswork charts. New Zealand had been seen, but exactly how big it was and whether it was part of Tasman's vague New Holland, no one knew.

Cook studied the journals and charts and listened to the rumors of men who had sailed the South Seas. He found that they had sailed along its edges but left its vastness to the southern wind.

Scurvy, the curse of sailors, had struck down the crews of all South Sea voyagers. Men's gums had turned to sponge around the roots of rotten teeth. Sores had spotted their skins. Pale and blotchy, they had lost their strength, their desire to work, and, it almost seemed, the will to save their lives.

It was clear to Cook that when ships sailed thousands of leagues from docks, yards, or help, they rotted from wear just as their crew rotted from scurvy. Rigging went ragged with age, frayed, and parted in the gentlest of breezes. Canvas sails turned gray with mildew and blew to bits in a gale. Wooden hulls grew barnacles and gave up their fibers to worms.

Cook realized what was needed to carry himself, his crew, and a group of scientists to the other side of the world and back

again. First of all he needed the right sort of square-rigged ship. So he went up the coast to Whitby and talked to his old friend John Walker. They sat down together in Walker's office, overlooking the harbor. Cook wasted no time.

"We need a sturdy ship," he said, "a ship with more hold than beauty, more strength than speed. She must have space to carry food for a hundred men on a two years' voyage. And I'll have no skimpy, scurvy-ridden stores. There must be room for all the common foods; sea-biscuit, salt meats, dry stores, if you will—but I mean to have space on my ship for malt, sweet-wort, sauerkraut, portable broth, wheat, oatmeal, and oils. I'll have no scurvy in my command if I have to carry the wheat fields of England between my decks to prevent it!"

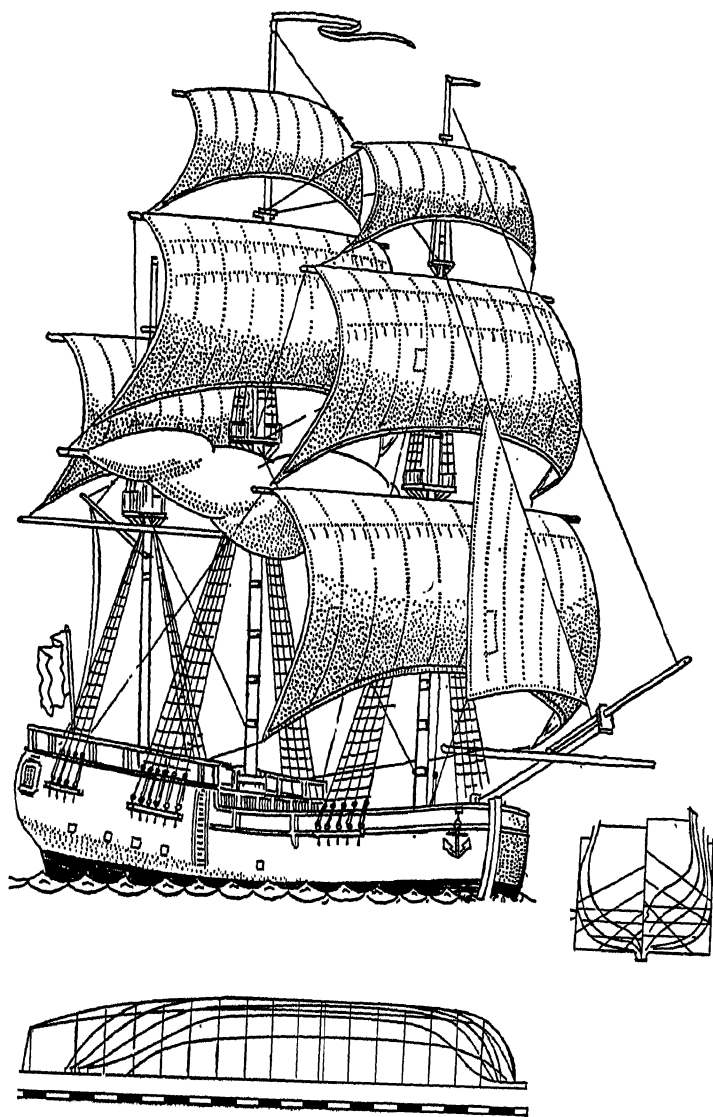
Walker turned in his chair and looked out the window as though searching the waterfront docks for a ship that could carry a wheat field.

"Will you not be able to freshen your stores along the way?" Walker asked.

"Aye, we might," Cook answered, "but I'll leave nothing to chance. Water we must find as we go, but we'll take enough casks for a thousand leagues out of sight of land. And we'll carry more than food," Cook went on. "There will be no graving docks or shipfitters shops in the South Seas. We'll carry everything with us—a league of spare lines for the rigging, cables for a deal of anchors, lumber for planking, yards, and jury-rig masts, if need be, and canvas enough to dress a squadron of ships after fifty gales."

Cook paused. He was making a long speech, but all in a good cause. Walker knew ships and could help him.

"She'll need to be deep in the hold to carry such a load," Walker said.



"Broad in the hold, or high in the hold, John," Cook answered, "but not deep. Charts don't tell us the water where we'll be cruising. Likely we'll spend long days playing blind-man's-touch with reefs and ledges, sailing by the leadsman's

cry. We'll have to bring into beaches and bays to make repairs and land our water parties and scientists. She must be shallow-draft, John."

"If you will be bouncing her off the bottom," Walker said, "and careening her on coral beaches, you will want her bottom sheathed in copper."

Again Cook shook his head. He had studied and planned. He knew what he wanted. "No," he said, "no copper sheathing. Putting in new bottom planks without a drydock will be difficult enough. Copper plates will only make our work harder. She must have double planking of wood—tight and sturdy, nothing more."

Walker looked at the wiry six-footer who sat in the office chair. He saw great, bushy eyebrows, lean cheeks, straight nose, and firm mouth. He remembered the young James who had shipped aboard Walker Company colliers out of that same port of Whitby. Young James had come a long way since then. He was not old now, but one could call him young no longer. Perhaps it was the way he had of letting one know that he knew what he wanted.

"Aye, James," Walker said, "I know a ship such as you need. You left colliers behind when you joined the men-of-war, but it's a collier you want now—a collier built for heavy loads, shallow or deep sea running, and tough enough for any blow."

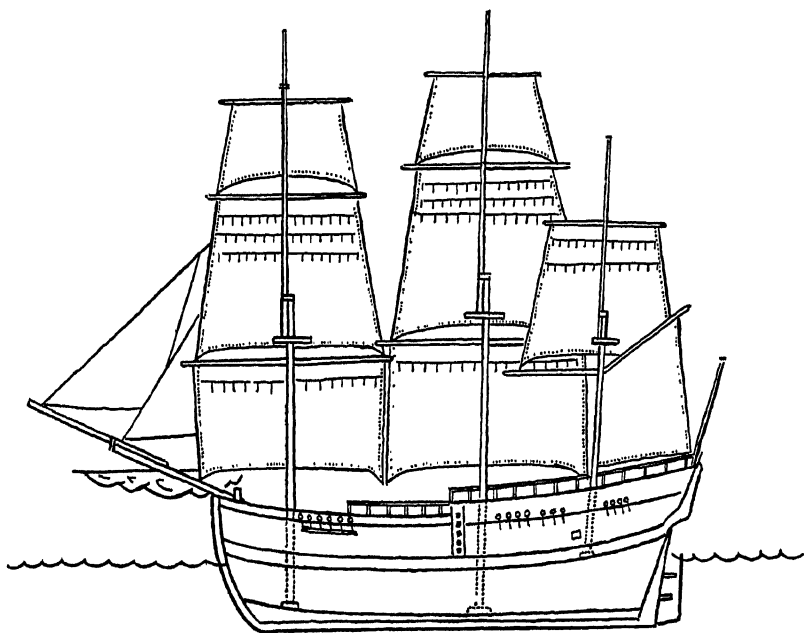
"That's my reason for coming to you, John," Cook said. "We want a collier, but not any collier will do. We don't want one so old she's weak in her joints, and we don't want one so new she doesn't know her way through a gale."

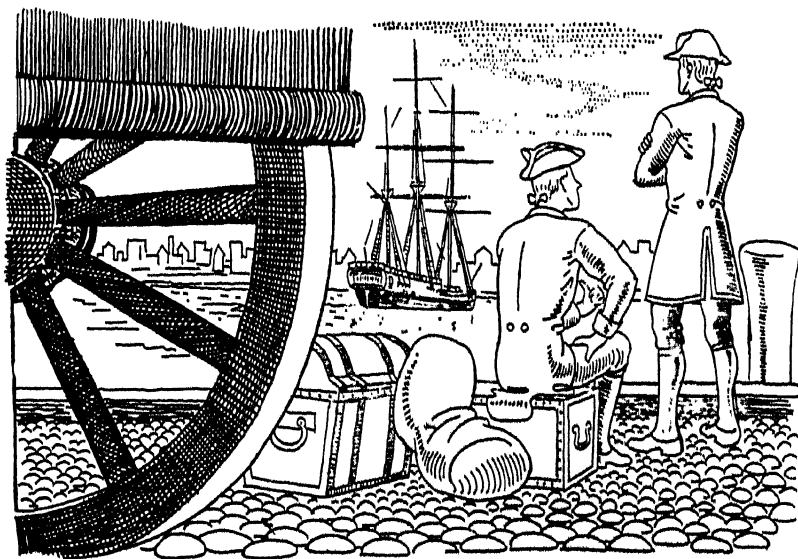
Walker was silent for a moment. Then he said, "There's a friend of mine owns just such a ship. She's Whitby built, about three years old, by Fishburn. They build a good ship. She's the

*Earl of Pembroke*, the same name as the man-of-war you sailed aboard off Canada.”

Cook and an Admiralty lord examined the *Earl of Pembroke* from keel to topmasts a few days later. They found her as good as Mr. Walker’s word. She was bought by the Admiralty and sent to Deptford for refitting under the direction of Cook.

On May 27, 1768, the *Earl of Pembroke* was commissioned His Majesty’s Ship *Endeavour*. That same day Lieutenant James Cook hoisted his pennant to her foremast and went aboard as commanding officer.





## *VII. Fitting Out*

Several weeks later, at evening, a cart drew up at the head of a dock on the Deptford waterfront. So still was the sunset air and so quiet the river Thames that the rattle of iron-rimmed cartwheels on cobblestones echoed far across the water. Two men jumped down from the wagon and began to unload chests and canvas bags. When they were finished, the driver turned his team and started back toward the town.

One of the men turned for a moment to watch the cart rumbling up the street. He was young, dark-haired, square-built, and tanned by wind. He stood with his legs slightly apart, as though expecting the street to roll and pitch beneath him.

"Well," he said, "that marks the end of a short leave after a long voyage."

His companion, a tall, thin man, bent down and picked up a

large wooden chest. His long, angular body moved with loose-jointed grace. As he stood up and slung the chest across his shoulders, he said, "Is it so, Mr. Gore? You didn't say you'd just come back from a trick at sea."

"Aye, Mr. Monkhouse, I have just." Gore made a wry face. "There's a touch of scurvy still under my skin, I'll be bound. And my head's still buzzing with thoughts of a roast of beef and long nights in a soft bed. Just in from halfway round the world, and ordered right off to a ship called *Endeavour*. Not a restful sounding name, that."

Gore picked up his chest and sea bag and the two men started toward the end of the dock. There they put down their loads and stood looking out over the water. Monkhouse raised a long, thin arm and pointed. He was smiling.

"If yonder's our ship," he said, "I don't wonder they've named her *Endeavour*. She'll need the endeavor of a gale of wind to get her down to the mouth of the river before the crack of doom." He chuckled and shook his head. "She looks the image of a hammerheaded shark with masts."

Monkhouse was very nearly right. Standing dark against water made bright by the last glow of day, her short masts and heavy rigging barely visible above the far riverbank, the *Endeavour* did have a blunt and clumsy look about her.

She was one hundred five feet long and twenty-seven feet wide. Her bow was broad and bluff; her waist was deep. Her poop was high and her stern tapered to a rectangular transom. A heavy sprit carried forward from her bow at an awkward angle. She looked dumpy, but she also looked tough. There was an air about her that suggested that though she might grunt when she moved, she would keep right on moving through any sort of sea.

The sun was down by the time Gore and Monkhouse climbed from a pinnacle to the rail of the *Endeavour*. They were met by a slender, light-haired officer who introduced himself as Lieutenant Hicks, second in command. He welcomed them aboard and quietly gave instructions that their gear was to be carried below by two seamen of the watch. He spoke calmly with the air of a man who would be obeyed because it was a pleasure to do his bidding.

"We've been expecting you," he said to Monkhouse and Gore. "You've the best part of an hour to make yourselves acquainted with your quarters and whatever parts of the ship you wish. Captain Cook left word that if you reported on board in time you were to attend a meeting in his cabin at eight by the bell."

After they had seen to their gear and inspected the quarters below, Monkhouse and Gore returned to the main deck. Though they had met one another but a few hours before in Deptford, they were drawn together by the strangeness that all sailors feel on their first day aboard a new ship. Neither man was new to ships or to the ways of seafaring life. They set off together to examine the *Endeavour* in the time left before they were to meet their captain.

As they walked forward along the starboard side they passed great coils of hempen line, piles of uncut canvas, and heavy pyramids of oaken casks. Near the scuppers at the rail were spars of many lengths, neat stacks of blocks, pulleys, spare belaying pins, and all manner of hardware. Forward of the great mainmast were five tarpaulin-covered heaps, which, by their shapes, indicated that boxes, barrels, and crates of many sizes were waiting to be stowed below.

Monkhouse turned to Gore. "Though I'm a sawbones not a salt, I've been at sea enough to know by the looks of this deck



that we'll be going a deal farther than the coast of France before we turn home."

Gore nodded. "Aye, it'll be a longish voyage." He leaned against the rail and looked back toward the town, where street lights were being lit by lonely men carrying long-handled torches. Monkhouse sat on a cask, which he hoped contained grog, and waited.

Soon the quartermaster of the watch by the wheel sounded one bell. Monkhouse and Gore hurried aft and joined a small group of men moving through the dark toward the captain's cabin. As the men entered and the light of the lantern swinging in brass gimbals over Cook's writing table fell on their faces, Gore gave a startled grunt and exchanged quick smiles with two of the others.

Cook rose and greeted each man. Lieutenant Hicks stepped forward and introduced the two new arrivals. When everyone had been seated, Cook said, "Mr. Gore, our third lieutenant, and Mr. Monkhouse, our surgeon, have reported on board within the hour. Our complement is now all but full. I have called you together because we leave Deptford on the morrow. We will drop down to Galleon's Reach to take on guns and gunners' stores. From there we will proceed to Plymouth, where marines and supernumeraries will come on board. We will take our final departure from there.

"There is much to do. So that all may work and direct the work of the men to best advantage, it is my wish that all shall know as much of the *Endeavour's* future course as is wise to disclose at this time."

Cook paused and stood silent a moment. He did not speak easily or quickly. "Mr. Gore," he said, "I see that you have recognized two shipmates from your recent cruise on the *Dolphin*.

Yourself and Mr. Molyneaux, our sailing master, and Mr. Pickersgill, master's mate, have been ordered to this ship for good reason. Your experience under Captain Wallis will be of use to the *Endeavour*.

"All of you have no doubt remarked that a collier such as this is not a ship common to the Royal Navy. The *Endeavour* is not a fighting vessel. Our plans include no battles. However, we shall carry guns and small arms. We may find them of use.

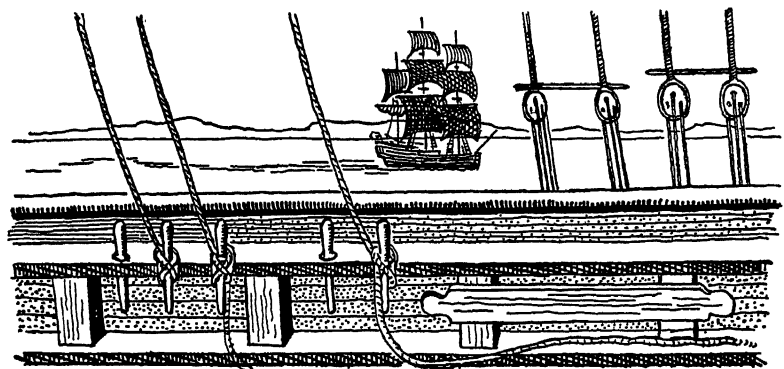
"I cannot tell you what our orders will be. They are sealed and will not be opened until we are well at sea. But this much you must know. The *Endeavour*, her equipment, her men, her officers, and myself have been selected for special duty. That duty will carry us to the South Seas, into waters that those of you from the *Dolphin* know well. But it will also carry us beyond that, into seas where no man has been before."

Cook paused again. There was a murmur among the men.

"Some of you may have wondered among yourselves," Cook continued, "concerning the cabins that have been added aft. When we drop down the river to Plymouth we shall take on board a party of gentlemen—scientists and draftsmen together with some few servants. We will carry them with us the full length of the voyage. They are not seamen and will have no ship's duties. It is necessary and proper that we assist them in every way possible in the work assigned them by the Royal Society.

"There will be time enough after they come on board in Plymouth for you to learn their plans. For the present it is our duty to see to it that the *Endeavour* is made ready—from the smallest penny nail in her planks to the last biscuit in her stores—for two years at sea, at the least."

Cook rose. The meeting was over.



## VIII. *Departure*

The passage from Deptford to Plymouth was slow. Winds blew light and winds blew contrary. Including the stop for guns at Galleon's Reach, the *Endeavour* took two weeks from port to port on the river.

But when she was finally moored to a Plymouth dock, there was scurry and work aplenty for any who were restless with delay. It started when Mr. Banks came on board. He was a wealthy young man, a member of London's most glittering society. He hustled and talked a good deal and demanded much for himself. But Banks was no fool. Young and active, he was eager to know what the world was about. He was a naturalist who had studied hard and learned much. Already he knew a great deal about plant and animal life in England and the New World. For all his fine clothes and sometimes domineering ways, he had given up a rich and easy life to sail with Cook to still newer worlds. Diamonds studded his waistcoat, but a scientist's gleam shone in his eyes.

Trooping up the gangway behind young Mr. Banks came

Dr. Solander and Mr. Sparing, also naturalists. Behind them came Mr. Green, the astronomer who was to help Cook take sights on the stars and observe the transit of Venus. Next came three artists who were to draw and paint pictures of the lands, birds, plants, animals, or people the expedition might discover.

Next to last, over the side and onto the deck, came four servants carrying enough boxes, cases, and oddly stuffed bags to cause a less sturdy ship to duck her rail to the water.

Last of all came four rangy dogs. Running in circles on long leashes, they sniffed in corners and barked as though greatly pleased with their new surroundings.

Shortly after Banks brought his party aboard a Mr. John Ellis of the Royal Society visited the *Endeavour*. So impressed was he by the equipment of the expedition that he wrote a letter to Linnaeus, the great Swedish scientist, which said:

No people ever went to sea better fitted out for the purpose of Natural History, nor more elegantly. They have a fine library of Natural History; they have all sorts of machines for catching and preserving insects; all kinds of *nets*, *trawls*, *drags*, and hooks for coral fishing; they have even a curious contrivance of a telescope, by which, put into water, you can see the bottom at a great depth, where it is clear. They have many cases of bottles with ground stoppers, of several sizes, to preserve animals in spirits. They have the several sorts of salts to surround the seeds; and wax, both beeswax and that of the myrica; besides, there are many people whose sole business it is to attend them for this very purpose. They have two painters and draughtsmen, several volunteers who have a tolerable notion of Natural History; in short Solander assured me this expedition would cost Mr. Banks £10,000. . . .

Banks did nothing by halves. He had been on board no more than ten minutes when he decided that the cabins built for his party were not to his liking and must be changed.

While carpenters hammered and sawed in the gentlemen's quarters, the marines came on board. They were a fine sight as they marched up the gangway. A midday sun shone bright on their twelve scarlet coats and glistened on their twelve shiny musket barrels. They were the last to come aboard, and their arrival was a signal for a noisy rush of last-minute confusion. Water casks were filled. Extra guns, powder, and stores were brought on board and stowed. Banks's private stock of lemons and limes had to be carefully carried to his cabin, along with innumerable bits and pieces of scientific apparatus, books, and gear for all his party. Pigs and chickens were hoisted on deck with squealing and cackling enough to cause many a sailor to dream of his farm-country home.

But the shrill whistle of the bos'n's pipe left little time for dreams. It was carry, hoist, and haul, day and night.

When seven days of work had passed, Cook called his crew together for the reading of the Act of Parliament and Articles of War. The men mustered on the main deck forward and waited in whispering quiet. Above them, aft on the quarter-deck, the captain stood. At his side was his second lieutenant, Mr. Hicks. Behind them stood Mr. Banks, Mr. Gore, Mr. Green, and Mr. Monkhouse. When everyone was quiet, Cook slowly read the words that every Navy man hears before his ship leaves port for the first time.

Cook finished his reading and handed the papers to Hicks. He turned again toward his men. "All of you know," he said, "that we look to a long voyage. I have given instructions that you be issued two months' pay in advance."

A murmur of pleasure went up from the men.

"But guard it well," Cook went on. "You will receive no more for the duration of the voyage." He paused for a moment, as

though listening to the silence of his men, then he went on, "We wait only for tide and weather to cast off."

The news was greeted by a cheer that echoed across the Sound. All hands were weary with delay and eager to be off, in spite of small fears that plagued many hearts at the thought of the long voyage to unknown seas and the years before they would see home again.

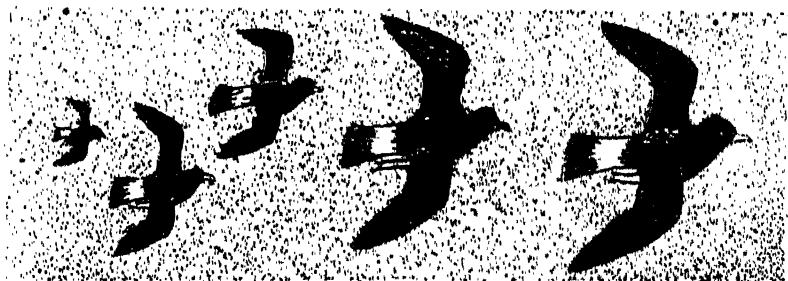
The day arrived when all was ready and the wind was fair. It was a Friday, and there were some among the crew who grumbled about sailing on the evil day of the week. But Cook was not a man to waste time in port for the sake of old wives' tales. It was Friday, August 26, 1768, when the *Endeavour* slipped her hawser and sailed from Plymouth Sound.

She was a happy ship as she left England in her wake. The days and months of hammering, fitting, hauling, and waiting were over. Skies were bright with a warm sun. Waves kicked their white heels to a quartering breeze. Seamen sang as they hauled on the braces and walked the capstan round. Lubbers' chores were past. This was sailors' work at last.

"Oh, haul and split the blocks,  
Cheer'ly men.  
Oh, haul and stretch her luff,  
Cheer'ly men.  
Young lovelies, sweat her up,  
Cheer'ly men.  
Cheer'ly, cheer'ly, cheer'ly oh!"

Above them, as they hauled, gleaming canvas swung, caught, and bellied in the breeze. Rigging grew taut and sang its wind-borne tone. Beneath them the *Endeavour* took the white bone of the sea in her teeth.





## IX. *Crossing the Line*

A few days out from Plymouth small dark birds fell in with the ship, circling her as she moved southward off the coast of Spain. One or two old seamen muttered solemnly while they watched the swift, nagging flight of the birds. "I told ye as much," grumbled one. "They be stormy petrels. We're for a mean blow. Mark my words, sail on a Friday and ye'll have black luck the whole voyage."

Storm clouds did close down, bringing a wind that whipped the *Endeavour* along her course. At the top of the gale the bos'n's smallboat ripped loose from her chocks and went over the side in a smother of green water. But, in spite of the loss of the boat and the drowning of a chicken or two, the storm did more good than harm. With wind howling through her rigging and seas pounding at her hull, the *Endeavour* learned to creak and groan as a good ship should. She shook down her spars, limbered her joints, and stretched her canvas. By the time the hard wind and long seas had subsided, her crew had learned her ways and found her sturdy.

Three weeks after the coast of England had settled over the horizon astern, Cook brought his ship into Funchal Roads, close under the hillside vineyards of the Madeira Islands. The stream



anchor was dropped, the cable payed out, and the *Endeavour* lay at rest.

In six days she was on her way again, her water casks full once more and her stock of beef and fresh vegetables greater than when she had left Plymouth. Most important to sailors' minds was the great hogshead of Madeira wine safely locked in her hold.

Cook set his course southwest by south for the eastern coast of South America, toward Cape Horn and the South Seas. From every yard full canvas was trimmed to the northeast trade winds.

Cook kept his men busy on the long southward haul. He gave them little time to lie in the sun and think of reasons for their spirits to be low. He found never-ending jobs for every man. When they drew near the equator, the wind fell to a whisper. Working the ship was a simple matter of keeping her rudder amidships and preventing slack rigging from chafing against sails that slatted back and forth with the motion of deep-water swells. Even then Cook kept his men busy. There were lines to be spliced, decks to be holystoned and swabbed. Small boats on deck, blistered by the sun, had to be scraped and painted.

Cook himself put every minute to work. When he was not in his cabin, poring over old charts of the Pacific or studying the journals of Tasman and Wallis, he was on deck with his quadrant, one leg braced against a stanchion, taking sights on the sun or stars to fix the ship's position. Or he was supervising the working of the ship and the life of his crew, ordering a better trim of sail or the burning of powder to purify the air between decks.

Often he stopped with Banks and Solander, the Swedish naturalist. He examined the fish and plants they were forever

dredging from the sea, read their notes, and asked them questions about their work.

Because he knew that sickness could strike a ship in calm, easy weather as well as in foul days, he spent much time inspecting the crew's quarters with Monkhouse and watching over their food. He ordered Hicks to see to it that below-decks gear was kept clean and dry. And even though he had to change the diet with a cat-o'-nine-tails, he forced his men to eat sauerkraut, sweetwort, and oatmeal, to ward off scurvy.

But there were days when life was not all work. On the twenty-fifth of October the *Endeavour* crossed the equator. After supper that night Mr. Hicks was sitting in his cabin, smoking his pipe before going on deck to inspect the watch. He had almost finished a pipeful when he heard uncertain sounds in the passageway. Opening the door, he saw a sailor standing ready to knock.

"Good evening, Evans," Hicks said. "What brings you here so soon after supper? Anything wrong below?"

Embarrassed at finding himself in the suddenly open doorway with his hand raised to knock, Evans snatched off his cap. "Why—why, no, sir," he said. "All's well below. It's only that some of the men has sent me to give ye this." He pulled a piece of paper out of his cap and handed it to Hicks. "It's a petition, ye might call it, askin' to examine everyone aboard to see can they prove they've crossed the line afore. Seein' as how we know ye be a shellback from more than one voyage south of the line, we thought ye'd be a likely one to lead the proceedin's."

Hicks smiled and asked the man into his cabin. There they examined the muster list and prepared an initiation fitting to the ancient customs of seafaring men.

The next day the weather was fair and calm. With Cook's

ready permission, the cry of "All hands on deck!" brought the entire company topside. A sailor's court was set up on the quarterdeck, and the ceremony began. Everyone, including the ship's cats and Banks's dogs, were called before Neptune's court. Those who could not prove by the sea chart that they had crossed the equator before were proclaimed hostages of Father Neptune, god of the sea. When the trial was over Hicks proclaimed that all hostages would be given a choice.

"In order to enter the realm of Neptune," the sentence was solemnly intoned, "those found lacking must forfeit four days' ration of grog or pay homage to his realm by suffering themselves to be ducked three times beneath the waves."

At this there was a loud outcry. Old shellbacks roared with pleasure at the thought of extra rum and the sport to be had. Those who had not crossed the line before cried out that they would be ducked three times under and pulled out twice before they would surrender their grog.

The ducking stool was rigged. A block was made fast at the tip of the main yard, far out over the side. Through the block was reeved a line with three slats secured near one end. One of the slats was a seat, which the uncomfortable victims were to straddle, with their ankles lashed together. The second was a handhold to prevent them from turning bottomside up under water. The third slat was a stop to keep the whole contraption from jamming in the block when it was hauled to the top.

When everything was ready a group of shellbacks suddenly rushed across the deck, swarmed about a red-faced sailor, and carried him to the ducking seat. "Make way for the bos'n's mate," they shouted. "He's first for Neptune!"

The unhappy man was soon lashed to the bottom slat. He

clutched the second slat as though his life depended on it. At that moment he may have regretted that it had been his duty to administer a few lashes now and again, and had time to ponder the roughness of his tone when he had roused the crew from peaceful sleep each morning with cries of "Fall to, all hands!" or "Show a leg and hop to it on the double!"

But the bos'n's mate had little time to regret his past. Before he quite knew what was happening, six shellbacks had grasped the free end of the line and were dashing across the deck with it. With a clatter and scrape he soared to the yardarm and swung dizzily over the sea.

Lined at the rail far below him was the entire ship's company. Even the officers, he noticed unhappily, seemed to be enjoying his helplessness. Mr. Monkhouse, in fact, was leaping about the deck with obvious joy, his long arms and legs flapping in a weird sort of dance.

Everyone was shouting. "Lookout ye don't fall, lad, the water's wet!" warned one. "Hang on when ye're under water or ye'll spin like a mill wheel," advised another. The worst jibes came from gay souls who mocked his own words from morning reveille: "Hit the deck, Jack! Rise and shine!"

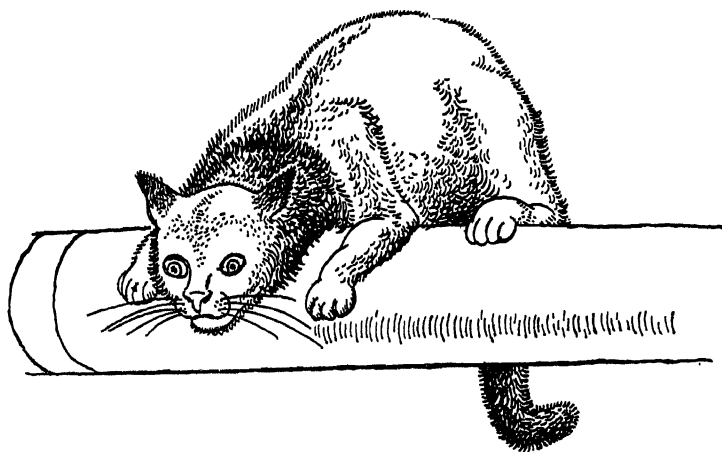
Even the captain leaned against the quarterdeck rail and looked on with quiet good humor. There was nothing for the bos'n's mate to do but take it all in good spirit. He opened his mouth with the full intention of proclaiming the beauty of the view from the yardarm and offering free rides to any who would join him. But before he could utter a sound his heart jumped to his throat. With a whirl and a hiss the line payed out through the block. In an instant he was under water. It was cool and pleasant, but he was too busy keeping his grip on the slat above his head to think of the pleasures of a tropical swim.

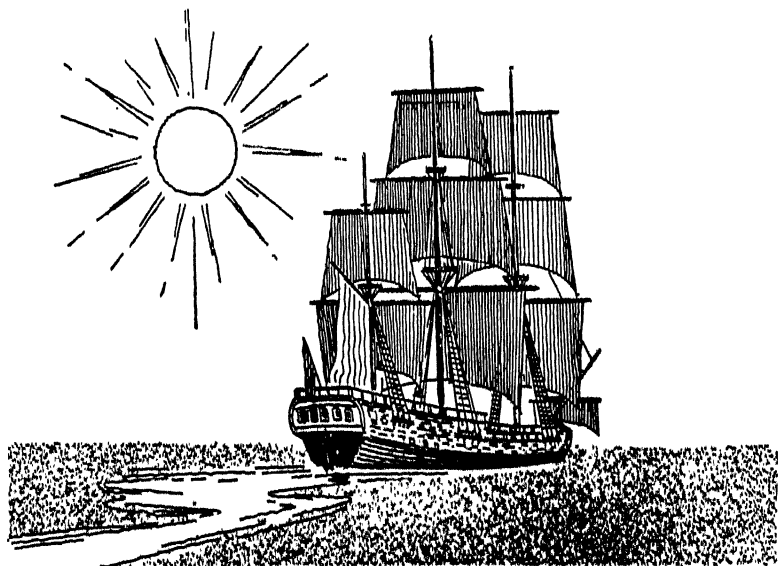
Just as he was sure he couldn't hold his breath another instant he felt a jerk on the line and he was on his way to the yard again, spluttering and coughing. Jeers and laughter from the deck came to him dimly, as though from far away. Three times he was ducked, with a bare moment to catch his breath between each plunge.

At last he was lowered slowly, while a guy line hauled him in over the deck. The lines about his ankles were removed, and he was helped to his feet with much clapping on the back. He was now a full-fledged shellback, free to stand at the rail and enjoy the initiation of others.

After the bos'n's mate's ducking, it was noticed, many who had loudly proclaimed their willingness to be ducked rather than forfeit grog quietly approached the court and made arrangements for handing over rum or good Madeira wine to old shellbacks. However, twenty-one men made trips from yardarm to water, much to the delight of all hands but themselves.

Banks stepped forward and paid the forfeit for his entire party, including his dogs. The ship's cats escaped to the rigging and quietly entered Neptune's realm without initiation or forfeit.





## *X. South Atlantic*

After crossing the line Cook held the *Endeavour* on a course that would carry them south and west toward the coast of Brazil. They passed many days drifting through the doldrums, then caught the southern trade winds. On November 13, 1768, they entered the harbor of Rio de Janeiro, the Portuguese capital of Brazil.

Twenty-four days later, after considerable trouble with the Viceroy of Rio, who insisted on acting as though Cook were a pirate, his men a band of brigands, and his story of the transit of Venus a fairy tale, they sailed from the beautiful bay. True, as a parting tribute the Viceroy's garrison near the entrance to the bay fired a few shots at the *Endeavour*. True, Lieutenant Hicks had barely escaped imprisonment, and Mr. Banks had been forced to sneak ashore in a most ungentlemanly manner

in order to examine the countryside. But Cook was satisfied, though silently angry. The Viceroy's shots had missed. Their stores were replenished. Mr. Hicks had been released, and Mr. Banks had come back from his secret trip ashore with enough strange plants to keep himself and Dr. Solander busy and happy for days to come. Above all, Cook and his expedition were on the last Atlantic leg of the course to Cape Horn and the South Seas.

It was December 7 when they sailed from Rio, late spring south of the equator. Standing by the rail on the first night out, a group of men were filling the warm, still air with talk.

"What makes those flashes of light?" a boy asked, pointing down toward the foam racing past the ship's side.

"Fish stirring up salt in the water. Anyone'd know that." The answer had come from Reading, the bos'n's mate. In spite of his ducking he had a ready answer to everything.

"That ain't it at all," said Thompson, the one-legged cook. "It's blubbers, that's what it is. Sort of jellyfish, they are. Always light up like a candle when a ship's bow catches them one on the snout."

"Listen to him!" said Reading. "Blubbers, he says!"

The bos'n's mate apparently had not been saving his grog for Christmas; he lurched unsteadily, caught his balance, and was about to enlarge his argument against blubbers further when a new voice was heard.

"Suppose we drop a net over the side and find out." It was Mr. Banks. He fetched a throw net and they cast it over the side. When they hauled it in they saw globs of a jellylike substance caught in its meshes.

"What did I tell ye," said Thompson, pivoting on his peg leg toward Reading. "They're blubbers right enough."

Banks, who had been examining the contents of the net, looked up. "The proper name for them is Medusae. See there—they have long tentacles like the snakes on that ancient lady's head. But I doubt that we'll all turn to stone by looking at them." With that highly confusing reference to Greek mythology, Banks put several jellyfish in a glass jar and walked off down the deck toward his cabin.

"We always called 'em blubbers," Thompson muttered weakly. This was followed by a silence. Then Thompson said, "Queer sort of cove, he is."

"Aye," said Reading. It was the first time he had agreed with anyone since the conversation had started. "And a queer sort of voyage this is. A king's ship full of blokes who spend their whole blasted time filling bottles full of blubbers or writing in books. Boxes full of machines lying about all over the place, dogs running wild over the ship like a blinkin' sea-goin' fox-hunt, gents with long fingers sittin' on barrels and drawin' pictures—crazy as a hare at noon, I tell ye. And sailin' under secret orders at that!"

Reading puffed out his cheeks and blew disgustedly. "Transit of Venus, me foot! There's something more than star-gazin' in those orders. It's enough to drive a man to drink."

Red-faced and a little mixed up in what he was saying, Reading subsided for a moment.

"Get on, Reading," Thompson said. "Ye've been drivin' your own self to drink ever since we left Plymouth—ever since ye gave off drinkin' milk for all I know. If we're not headed for some island in the South Seas, like they say, to watch Venus through the long glass, then where are we headed and what're we going to do when we get there?"

Reading had an answer for that too. But before he could find



his words a voice from the darkness near the foremast answered for him.

"If ye really want to know, I'll tell ye."

"Well, if it isn't one of our beautiful marines," Reading said. "And I suppose Captain Cook took ye into his cabin and told ye all about it, him bein' the talkative soul he is. Let's hear all about it, laddy."

"At your service," said the marine. "If there's anything—anything at all—ye wish to know, just ask a marine."

"Since ye know so much, Mr. Marine Gibson," Reading bel-lowed, "just step up and tell us where we're headed."

"Well," said Gibson, moving toward the group of men and bowing, "I don't say the captain told me this directly, but I did happen to overhear him and Mr. Banks arguing about it."

"Trust a marine to stick his ear in every knothole," muttered Reading unpleasantly.

"As I was saying, before a certain low-grade bos'n's mate interrupted," Gibson went on, "the captain and Mr. Banks talked a good bit—with Mr. Banks making the most noise, mind you, but Captain Cook making the most sense, it seemed like to me. I'll admit I did not rightly understand all they said, what with my work to do while they talked. But from what I did hear, I'll lay five gold sovereigns against a rum-bottle cork that we are headed for a place called King George's Island to observe the transit of Venus."

"Agh!" said Reading. "Is that all ye can tell us? We've heard that rot before."

"That," said Gibson, ducking his head in mock formality to the bos'n's mate, "is not quite all. Mr. Banks kept walking up and down, talking about a continent in the South Seas that no man has ever seen."

"If no one's seen it, how do they know it's there?" asked a boy.

"They don't, but they think it must be there—something to do with balancing the world. It seems there is a deal of land in the north that needs balancing."

"What did the captain have to say about this continent?" Thompson asked.

"He said blessed little that I could hear," the marine replied, "except that the thing to do was to go and see for sure is it there or is it not. Got old Banks quite up in the air, the captain did, by not getting all heated up about the continent."

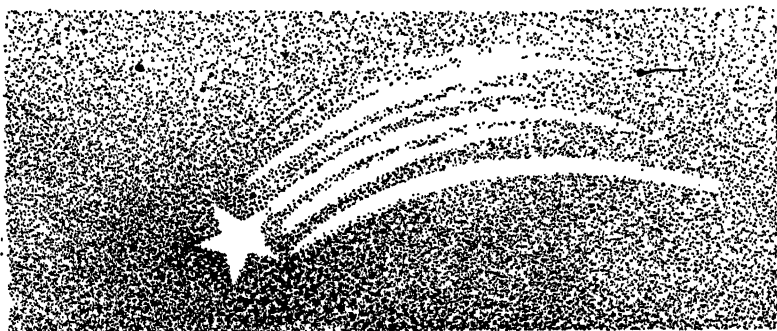
Suddenly Reading, who had subsided gloomily against the rail during the last part of the discussion, turned around excitedly. "That's it!" he shouted. "Undiscovered continents, colonies, glory for the empire, gold for everyone! That's more like the stuff to feed the buckos!"

"All the same," Gibson said, "this transit of Venus is our first business."

Reading roared, "Don't ye talk to me of stars a million leagues away when there's gold to be dug from under every bush. We'll be rollin' back to England with every pocket full!"

"I'll wager on it with any man," Gibson replied. "I'll wager the captain takes a sight on Venus crossing the sun from King George's Island before there is a word said by him about any continents to be found. Come on, Reading, all the gold in my pockets by the time we sight the Thames against your grog from now to Christmas."

Reading only laughed. Then he walked unsteadily forward toward the hatch that led below.



## *XI. Land of Fire*

The *Endeavour* sailed south through the December summer, passing Christmas along the way. Except for a storm that spun past them two days out from Rio de Janeiro, the weather was fair.

There was excitement among the naturalists one day when they sailed through a suddenly muddy sea, out of sight of the land where the great River Plate emptied the wipings of its jungle banks into the Atlantic. And once when a meteor's frightening flash severed a night's infinitely deep sky, even older men wondered at their world.

Day by day a month passed in the routine work of the ship. Cook wasted few moments relaxing during these easy days. He was past the last port where food and water and repairs could be purchased. Ahead lay Cape Horn. There the Atlantic met the Pacific near the bottom of the world. His charts told him little. Some explorers drew in land where others marked a hundred fathoms of cold, gray water. Some claimed in their journals that

the only possible route was through Magellan's straits, while others spoke for a wide turn around the end of land at Cape Horn.

Cook was sure of only one thing. The passage from the Atlantic, around the Horn, and into the South Seas was one of the most dangerous in all the oceans. Two halves of the world met at the Horn and generated storms that sometimes lasted three months. Tides and currents collided in rips that slashed great waves against the wind, and ships tossed like driftwood. While the weather was still fair Cook began to prepare for the trial he knew was coming.

On the last day of 1768 he ordered new sails bent on every spar. At a word from Molyneaux, four sailors climbed the foremast ratlines and inched their way out on a long, tapering yard. On deck two groups of men waited, one by the larboard and one by the starboard rail. Molyneaux waited until he saw an arm wave from high in the rigging. He turned and called to the men on deck, "Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Clerke! Foretopgallant—let go sheets!"

Above, on the foremast, a sail bellied, lifted forward, and spilled its pocket of wind. Flying free, it luffed in majestic, whip-snapping rolls. The four seamen hooked their heels on a cable that stretched from tip to tip beneath the yard, leaned far out over the spar, and gathered the lashing canvas, fold by fold, in across their chests. When the sail was tamed and stopped securely into a tight roll, they unlaced the lashings that secured it to the yard and removed the sheet lines from its clews. Then they tied it in a bundle and passed it on a handline to the deck beneath them.

Below, Mr. Clerke secured a gleaming parcel of new canvas to the line and watched while it rose to the bare topgallant

yard. When the new sail had been lashed in place, with the sheet lines secured at its clews, each man aloft stripped off a stop. The sail dropped, unfurled, and rippled out in the wind.

"Take in sheets! Look alive!"

Lines rattled through their blocks, grew taut, and slowly trimmed in the bucking sail. It gave a final heave, then bellied full and strained at the yard. To the men on deck it stood out clean and startling against the mass of gray canvas surrounding it.

One by one, old, weakened, and mildewed sails were replaced. At the end of the day the *Endeavour*, more than four thousand miles from home, had the appearance of a new ship. She was ready for whatever Cape Horn had to offer.

As they bore steadily south the air became cooler. Albatross fell in with the ship, flying in great, lazy circles close astern. Whales were sighted, blowing curves of spray above their hulks. Seals passed, swimming north, and for hours at a time porpoises dived and surfaced a few feet from the *Endeavour's* bow.

Then, on the eleventh day of 1769, a cry from the masthead sent men up the rigging on the double. Cook seized his glass and climbed to the foretopsail yard. Ahead, like a pale thickening of the horizon, lay Tierra del Fuego—Land of Fire—the last, lonely spit-end of South America.

As the ship closed the land, Cook saw that it was not as bare and desolate as the journals of Wallis and Carteret had described it. Although it was midsummer, and he could see patches of snow here and there, trees and low green bushes covered all the land except the naked summits of its hills. Even so, he thought, Land of Fire seemed an odd name for a craggy, off-shore island where trees bent before cold winds that raced north from the pole.

For the next three days they ranged southeast along the coast, watching for the strait between the southern end of Tierra del Fuego and Staten Island. Once through the strait, the worst part of rounding the Horn would be over.

On the fourth day the coastline bent sharply south and rounded into the west. It was the Strait of Le Maire. Deep in the haze that lay across its water they could see Staten Island.

At once Cook gave the order to trim sail and round up to the west for the passage. Under the lee of the land as they were, the wind was gentle, the tide slack. Slowly the *Endeavour* worked along the curving shore and inched her way toward the strait.

On the quarterdeck Cook searched the surface of the water ahead with his glass. Mr. Banks, who had been leaning against the rail talking to Mr. Monkhouse about the land that moved past their starboard hand, looked up. "What do you see ahead, Captain? It looks as calm as a millpond to me."

Cook did not answer. Lowering his glass, he turned to his sailing master. "Double the masthead lookout, Mr. Molyneaux, and put another man on the wheel."

"Aye, aye, sir," Molyneaux replied. Striding forward, he called out. "Anderson! Here, stand by to help Evans at the wheel. Gray, take my glass and run up the ratlines to the nest. When ye're up there, lad, keep a sharp eye on the water as far ahead as ye can. Give us a halloo if ye see anything—even if ye think it's of no importance."

Molyneaux watched Gray going up the rigging until he was lost in the high tangle of spars, lines, and canvas. Then he returned and spoke to Banks.

"They'll think I've struck a snag in my head—doubling the watches while we slip through the strait as quiet as a lazy eel."

"So it seems," said Banks. "The passage is a trifle disappointing. I almost wish it would live up to its reputation and force us to put in at some anchorage. I would give my best waistcoat to explore those hills."

"Aye," answered Molyneaux, "but with all the pretty calm, the captain has put another man at the wheel and doubled the lookout aloft. Seems queer, but I've found that he's a man who knows what he's about when it comes to handling a ship."

Molyneaux was moving back to his place beside Cook when a cry came from Gray on the masthead. "There's a dark line in the water off the point. Looks like a tide rip from here."

Molyneaux glanced quickly at Banks. To the men at the wheel he said, "Evans, Anderson, both of you hold her hard when we clear the point. That tide rip might give the wheel a bit of a kick."

Cook said nothing for some time. His glass swung ceaselessly back and forth over the water between the southern tip of Tierra del Fuego and the island to leeward.

"Mr. Molyneaux," he said after a few minutes had passed, "put more men on the sheets, clews, and braces. I hope to make it through on this tack, but we may have to put her over."

As they neared the point the light breeze grew into puffs of wind that came and went, alternately lifting the ship along her course and leaving her adrift in vacant air. By the middle of the morning they had crossed the rip with a small jolt at the helm and were entering the narrowest reaches of the strait.

Inside the rip the tide was slack again and the wind fitful. Anderson, the extra man at the wheel, relaxed his grip on the spokes and leaned lazily against the binnacle. On the main deck the men standing by the sheets and braces squatted under the rail, talking, or watched the coast slide slowly past. In one

of the groups the bos'n's mate had words for the situation.

"Here we wait," said Reading, "two men for every foot of line, with scarcely a breath of air to haul against. Rot! I could take every sheet line, brace, and clew in my own two hands and wear ship without a blinkin' man-jack to help me."

Before Reading could say more, the lookout hailed the deck. "Ahoy on deck! Dead ahead there's a mean-lookin' rip comin' down the passage. Rough water beyond it!"

At first the second rip looked very much like the one they had just passed. But in a short time it took on body, its dark line becoming jagged with waves. The wind remained light and fitful but began to veer about in unsteady gyrations.

Cook put down his glass. The advancing waves were near enough now to be seen clearly. "Hold her steady as she goes," he said to Molyneaux. "Alert the men. The rip is closing us fast. We'll try to buck through it."

"Aye, aye," said Molyneaux. "Looks like the whole Pacific Ocean is coming at us."

"It is," Cook answered.

Suddenly a heavy gust of wind swirled down on them, pitching the rail under. "Shorten sail, Mr. Molyneaux," Cook said, without turning his eyes from the moving wall of water ahead.

Molyneaux cupped his hands to his mouth. "All hands, here!" he roared. "Shorten sail! Fore and main courses!" On deck the master's mates echoed him.

"Look alive!"

"Fore and main courses. Let go sheets and tacks!"

"Clews—up with the clews! Look lively!"

Men were still shortening sail when Cook's voice suddenly boomed out above all others. "Drop the lines! Every man down! Hug the deck!"



The first great wave had reached the *Endeavour*. From dead ahead the tide struck. The ship reared back. But as fast as the bow reached for air the wave rose faster.

It raced solidly over her deck, broke against the poop-deck bulkhead, parted and shot past the quarterdeck in a smother of spray. Men clung to their holds while water buried them deep, then left them spluttering in the air again.

As suddenly as she had reared the *Endeavour* dived. Heeled over hard in the wind that swept from crest to crest of the seas, she slid into the trough. Her bowsprit caught the leveling curve at the base of the wave and went under. With a racking shudder she jerked free and rose once more.

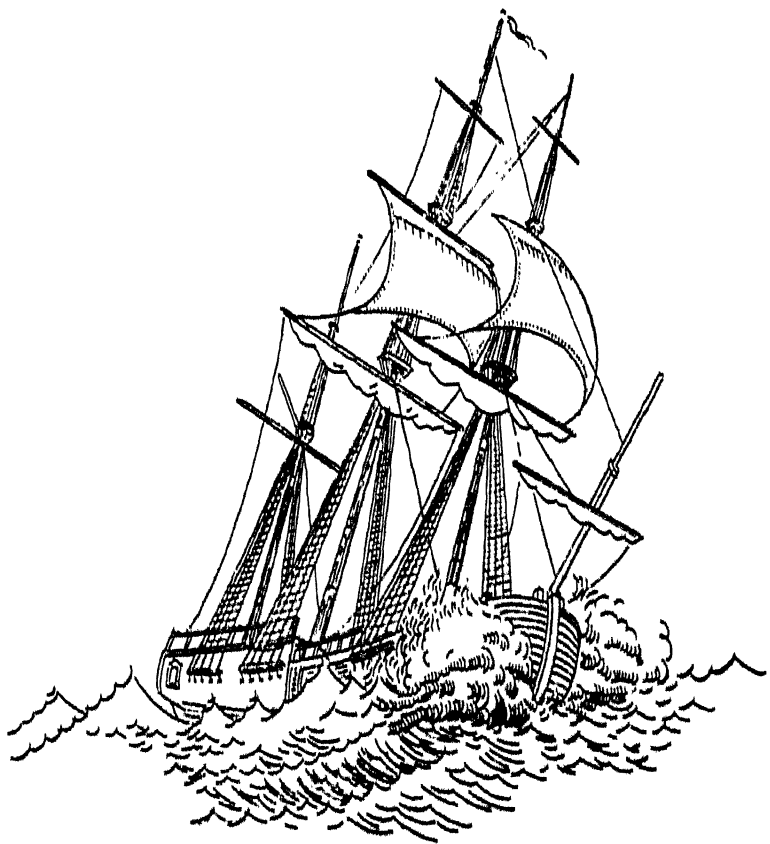
From the scuppers under the quarterdeck rail a burst of loud language accompanied the motion of the rearing ship. Monk-house, shaking and spitting water, rose to one elbow and looked about him. "Blast!" he said. "A man can get cold and wet in a blazing hurry in this Land of Fire!"

No one answered him, but even Cook relaxed somewhat, though his eyes never left the course ahead.

After the first few close-knit seas had passed, the waves widened their ranks and the *Endeavour* rode more securely, though she continued to pitch in violent heaves.

The wall of water had been thrown up by the meeting of two opposing tides. In the churning rip, currents fought in circles, tossing the ship wildly about. At times her rudder was all but useless. Although Anderson and Evans clung to the wheel and held her head more or less straight into the seas, she was driven steadily back, out of the strait. Cook watched the shoreline retreat past the starboard side.

"Put her on the starboard tack," he said to Molyneaux. "Take her under the lee of the point."



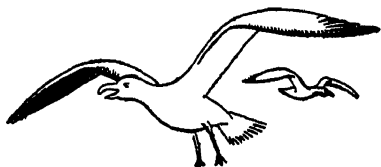
Again Molyneaux cupped his hands to his mouth. "Mr. Clerke, Mr. Pickersgill!" he called. "To the braces. Put her on the starboard tack."

"Braces it is."

"Hard-a-starboard."

"Starboard it is."

Cook eased the *Endeavour* off the wind while she was in the trough between two waves. When she rose she took water over the poop, yawed heavily, and careened toward the sheltered shore.



## *XII. The Night*

Above the beach was a bank of red earth. Slicing through it here and there were streams of dark brown water. Beyond the bank a forest sloped toward a bare hilltop a few miles inland.

The rattle of the stream-anchor cable echoed against the bank and the forest. It was a good harbor, calm and deep. After the thrashing off Cape San Diego, a day and a half of waiting for a fair tide, and then the swift dash through the strait, it was a fine harbor for rest, fresh water, and wood. Cook drew its shoreline on his chart and named it the Bay of Success.

On deck Banks and Solander were talking. "We must explore the woods," Solander said. "It does not seem a rough country."

"Easy enough," Banks agreed, "but we'll not stop at the woods. Look," he said, pointing inland, "where the trees end and the land slopes into the hill. There's open ground there. And rocks near the summit. I'll be bound there're mountain plants among them."

"It might be so," Solander answered. "In any event, the weather's fair and a tramp on land might loosen our muscles. I'm weazened with being so long on the ship."

"That's it then," said Banks. "We'll start at dawn and be back on board for supper."

Morning dawned still and clear. Banks bounded on deck, followed by Solander, Buchan, and Green. Early as they were, Cook was already up. He was examining the shore through his

glass. Near him stood Monkhouse, gazing absently at the beach.

"Never!" Banks cried out. "Never in the world was there such a January day."

"Aye," said Cook, "mild as May in England. You've good starting weather for your trip."

Monkhouse turned lazily around and hooked his elbows on the rail. "Mr. Banks," he said, "the captain has granted me leave. If you've no objection, I'd like to trail along. I've a mighty itch to feel solid earth between my toes and straddle a hill that's dry and steady-fixed to the world."

"Come along and welcome," Banks replied. "The more hands we take, the more specimens we'll carry back. Waste no time. The weather's too cheery to waste."

Gathering his retinue, twelve men in all, Banks started his expedition off in high good spirits.

"See you're back by sundown," Cook told him as they climbed into the boat. "Mark your track going in. The weather is changeable here, as we've found. You might have need of a trail to follow on your return."

Leading his party, Banks waded ashore from the boat, crossed the muddy beach, and climbed the bank beyond. Slipping and skidding, the others followed. When everyone had gathered at the top, he set off at a good clip into the woods.

What had seemed to be a thin forest quickly became a mass of close-grown trees. Underfoot was a windfall of trunks and branches, matted by wiry bushes. Pausing now and then only long enough for the others to come up with him, Mr. Banks moved through the woods in nervous leaps. Dodging and stumbling behind him, the rest of the party strung out in a crooked line. Monkhouse, lazing along in the rear, wondered at Banks's energy.

"A queer one," he said to Buchan, who was walking near him. "First he's the grand gentleman, parading the deck in clean linen ruffles as though he were on his way to a rout in Piccadilly. Then he's hopping like a fox through the trees, not caring a sneeze of snuff about tearing his breeches."

Buchan slapped at a gnat. It seemed as though even a gnat should give up after being slapped a hundred times. He said nothing, marveling to himself that Monkhouse should have enough breath to talk. His own was coming in short gasps.

At two o'clock in the afternoon Banks called a halt. He had planned lunch on the hilltop, but the forest still stood dark around them. "We'll eat here," he said. "Rest easy but eat quickly. The edge of the forest must be near at hand."

"I say, Banks," Solander said when the meal was almost finished. "It's getting on. We'll be late and in the dark by the time we reach the ship unless we turn back soon."

Banks rose from the tree trunk he had been resting against, picked up his fowling piece, and dusted his coat. "The light lasts late here in January," he said. "We'll give it a try."

They had been moving again only a short time when Banks suddenly stopped. He raised his hand to halt those behind him. Then, crouching low, he moved off to his left and disappeared behind a heavy growth of brush. An instant later his fowling piece blasted through the forest. After considerable thrashing Banks emerged, carrying his smoking gun in one hand and a huge, broad-winged bird in the other. He was elated.

"As fine a vulture as I've seen," he said. "The first great land bird for our collection." He handed the bird to one of his men, ordered another to reload his gun, and started off again.

It was three o'clock when the last of the party caught up with Banks. He was standing quietly at the edge of the woods.

Ahead, an open, treeless stretch rose to the rocks of the hill in the distance.

"Swamp," he said.

"Aye," added Solander, "ankle deep."

For a moment they stood silently staring at the muck at their feet. Then Monkhouse grinned and lightly slapped his thigh. "Easy walking," he said, "for a long-legged, boat-footed bird like myself."

Banks looked up and chuckled. "Come, lads, our hill's but a short hour distant. It will be a bit mean in spots—no doubt of it. But we've come too far not to have a try at it. We'll have no second chance."

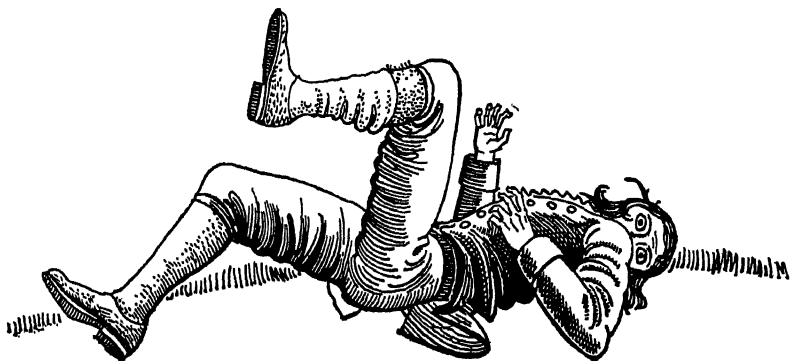
The surface of the swamp was spiked with birch bushes three feet high and stiff as iron. Leaping from hummock to hummock, the party beat a zigzag course toward the hill.

Before they had gone a hundred yards the sun began to pale behind a flat gray sky. A chill entered the air. Ooze sucked at their feet between dry spots. Soon they felt the breeze rise to a wind and grow cold as it grew strong.

"Don't like the feel of it," Solander called to Banks. "If I didn't know January was midsummer in this benighted land, I'd say we were in for snow."

"Keep moving," Banks answered. "If we make good time we can beat the storm to the top of the hill and be back in the cover of the woods before we're any the worse off. Exercise will keep us warm."

When the snow came, it swirled about them in thin streaks, not thick enough to blanket the ground. Fat flakes melted as soon as they landed or clung for an instant to birch branches before dripping into the swamp.



They had crossed two-thirds of the marsh when a cry from the rear of the party brought those in the lead to a halt.

"Hold up! There's something wrong with Buchan!"

Jumping from dry spot to dry spot, Banks raced back. Monkhouse was bent over Buchan, who lay writhing on the ground. Eyes rolled back until only the whites showed, the man was jerking in violent spasms. His legs went straight and rigid, then doubled at the knee and kicked at the air. His arms flailed and wrenched. His tongue protruded from his mouth and foam fluttered on his lips.

Looking up at Banks, Monkhouse spoke quietly. "A bad fit. He's subject to them. There's nothing to be done but wait it out. Meanwhile we must keep him warm."

Turning quickly, Banks snapped an order. "You, Richmond and Dorlton, build a fire behind that bush, out of the wind.

By the time the fire was burning and Buchan had been moved near its warmth, his spasms had almost ceased. He lay panting on a bed of birch branches.

Leaving the most exhausted members of the party to care

for him, Banks, Solander and several others pushed across the last of the swamp. Half an hour later they reached the summit.

They moved quickly in the increasing cold and snow, gathering wild mountain plants. Even though time drove them to speed and the wind stung like a thousand spurs, they paused to wonder at flowers that fought through to blossom among the rocks of a land where snow fell in summer.

Going back across the swamp toward the fire, they found the mire beginning to stiffen in the cold. Its dark surface was hidden beneath a thin layer of white. Wind rushed across it and drove through their clothes.

Before the party had assembled again around Buchan's fire, it was eight in the evening. Across the swamp they could just see the loom of the forest.

"How is he?" Banks asked Monkhouse.

"The fit has left him. He'll do now."

"I'm able to move on," Buchan said. "My strength is with me now. A man gets used to things."

"If you're able we'd best be going," Banks said. "It will be full dark soon. We'll make for the woods and camp out of the wind for the night."

Again they set out across the swamp. The ground was frozen into pits and cracks. No longer able to see through snow that drove into their faces, they tripped often, sometimes falling face down in the snow. Birch branches sprang suddenly from the storm and slashed across their chests and legs, tearing clothes and reaching the skin beneath.

Banks walked last, watching for stragglers. Ahead of him Solander stamped his feet. He shivered, feeling the sweat freeze on his back. Cold was stiffening his joints and slowing his muscles. His clothing was light, worn for the warm morning air.



A blasted land this, he thought. A summer day could become like days he had known crossing the mountains of Sweden in winter. There, at least, a man knew what to expect. Crossing mountains in wool capes and hoods, with boots felt-lined and high for the snow, was fine free work. But here, with the seasons turned topside down and no two hours of a day alike, a man could die in the evening because he had dressed for the morning.

At the head of the column Monkhouse, silent now, paused in the thin shelter of a bush and waited for Banks to bring up those in the rear. One by one men came lurching out of the dark, blinking, the snow in their eyes. The cold seemed to grow more intense moment by moment.

At last Banks arrived. He counted heads. "All here. Stay close together. It's too cold for another stop. We'll be in the shelter of the woods in a short while if we push on hard."

He looked at the men around him. They were breathing in short gasps as though afraid to suck the stinging air into their lungs. At every breath the wind whipped steam from their mouths. Some, crouching low behind the bush, already were dull-eyed with fatigue and cold.

"Frost in the blood brings sleep," Solander said. "Keep moving. Whoever stops will go down in the snow to sleep. Whoever sleeps will wake no more."

Under the shouted urgings of Banks, they pushed slowly out from the shelter of the birch bush and made a slow way toward the woods that lay somewhere in the storm ahead. They plodded through snow above their ankles. Around them all Banks moved, shouting, goading, pushing. Those who slowed or staggered away from the group he hounded—now encouraging, now spitting insults. Once his servant, Briscoe, stumbled

and went to his knees. Banks rushed at him. "Come, man. Up on your feet and you'll be out of the wind in no time."

Briscoe looked at him with dull eyes and made no move to rise.

Banks screamed above the wind, "Get up or we'll leave you to freeze with nothing but thoughts of your puny strength for company."

Briscoe rose and stumbled forward.

In spite of his own warning and his knowledge, Solander was the first to give in. Throwing himself at the foot of a scrubby tree, he rested his head in the snow at its roots.

Banks was on him like a cat. "Solander," he shouted, "are you mad? Get up, man! Of us all you know best that you'll die in this miserable swamp unless you keep moving."

"Leave me—let me sleep a moment," Solander murmured. "Sleep for a moment—come up with you soon." His eyes closed.

"Here, Monkhouse!" Banks cried. "Give me a hand." Together they lifted Solander to his feet, worked his arms, and rubbed blood into his legs. They half dragged, half pushed him forward. Again he went limp and buckled to the ground.

Holding Solander's shoulders off the snow with one arm, Banks drew back his hand and slapped him full in the face. Solander's eyes remained closed.

"Richmond," Banks called. "You and Dorlton, hands to wrists! Make a seat and carry him." There was no answer. Looking around, he saw Richmond down in the snow. Dorlton stood staring at him.

"It's no good," Buchan said, "we can't carry both of them. No one would reach the forest."

"I will stay with Solander and Richmond," Banks answered. "Dorlton, you stay with me and we'll try to keep them awake."

Monkhouse, you and Buchan take the others ahead. As soon as you find shelter enough to build a fire, send the stronger ones back and we'll try to get both of them in."

Banks and Dorlton worked on the two men. They talked to them, shook them, and rubbed their legs. For a few moments they responded. Then they sank into sleep. In spite of all that Banks and Dorlton could do, Solander and Richmond lay as though dead, barely breathing.

It was not long before word came that a fire had been started in a hollow, a short space ahead. Grasping Solander beneath the arms, Banks managed to stand him up.

"Solander! Solander!" he urged. "Wake, man! Move! There's a warm fire ahead. If you'll walk, fight it for five minutes, you can sleep the rest of the night."

Slowly Solander's eyes opened. "Yes." He heard his own voice as though from a distance. "Yes, I'll go now. Then sleep. Yes."

No amount of urging could force Richmond to his feet. Dorlton and McKee, the messenger from the party ahead, tried to carry him. They stumbled and fell as soon as they had started.

"Stay with him, McKee," Banks shouted. "You and Dorlton stay here. I'll get Solander to the fire and send two men back to carry him in. Keep him awake. Help will be with you in ten minutes—I promise it."

Staggering dazedly, Solander reached the fire. As soon as he came within the circle of light, others helped Banks lower him to the ground. He sighed and fell asleep, the warmth beginning in him.

"Two of you," Banks said, "go back for Richmond. The two strongest of those who have been near the fire. When you find Dorlton and McKee, send them here. Then carry Richmond. You

know the way—to the birch where Solander first went down.”

When the two men had gone, silence fell on the group. An hour passed while they stared into the flames or slept away exhaustion. Snow flew in from the dark and melted in the blaze.

Buchan squirmed around to warm his other side. “Cursed country,” he said.

“Wouldn’t be so cursed,” Monkhouse answered, “if we’d thought to bring rum to warm our insides.”

“Ah!” Buchan cried, a look of delight and horror on his face. “I’m a blasted fool, for sure.” He reached into a small sack slung over his shoulder, rummaged among the brushes and paints at the bottom, and pulled out a bottle.

“Enough for a swallow each at the least, leaving some for the five still out.”

While the bottle was being passed from hand to hand around the fire, Banks peered into the darkness. “They should be back by now,” he said.

“Slow work carrying a sleeping man in rough footing,” Monkhouse answered.

“Aye,” added Buchan, “dead weight.”

Banks frowned at the words and was about to say something more when two men stumbled into the light.

“Couldn’t find ’em,” one gasped. “Must’ve moved. Looked in the very spot you said. No sign of ’em.”

By midnight they had given up hope. Banks had been silent for more than an hour. He had promised help and failed. All attempts to find the men had been useless. With snow now thick on the ground he couldn’t be sure that they had found the right place. All birch bushes and all dips and hollows looked alike in the night. They could do no more. Every man was exhausted.

“Mr. Banks,” Monkhouse said, “with the snow coming down

worse than ever it seems as though we might dig in somewhat deeper and put a few birches on their ends in the drift to break the wind a mite."

Banks rose immediately. "Yes," he said, "let's get to it." Together they started into the darkness to look for wood. They floundered in knee-deep snow before they were beyond the firelight.

"Wait!" Banks cried suddenly. He crouched and shielded his ears from the wind with his hands. After a moment he leaped to his feet and plunged through the deep snow toward the center of the swamp. Monkhouse followed, his long strides clearing four feet at a stretch.

"There!" Banks shouted, turning to his left. "Hold, man, we're coming. Oh, God! It can't be—it's McKee!"

McKee had barely enough strength to stagger. As Banks and Monkhouse threw their arms about him he sagged in their grip.

"Praise God you're safe," Banks cried. "Hold up a little. We'll have you by the fire in three steps and wrapped around a shot of rum for good measure. You've carried yourself through more than we thought a man could do and live. Don't give in now."

Together the three men started toward the fire.

Banks said suddenly, "If McKee's been able to save himself, there's hope for Richmond and Dorlton. You take him in, Monkhouse, I'll go for them. McKee, where did you leave the other two?"

McKee's arm rose and swept slowly across his mouth, brushing at the thin frost that lined his lip. He pointed into the dark. "Ye'll find them where ye left us, stiff and dead, like as not."

"I'll go," Banks said. "When you get McKee to the fire, send

every able man after me. Send them at once. They can follow my tracks if they move out before the snow fills in." He paused and then went on, almost in a whisper, "And tell him, Monkhouse. Tell him we tried while we could."

Banks followed McKee's tracks, his head bent, his legs pumping deep into the snow. The trail circled aimlessly. Banks groaned as he hurried. Now, when he could hope again, he had to move like a blind man. Bushes stabbed at him, pits, hidden in the snow, threw him headlong, knocking the strength out of him bit by bit. Cursing aloud, he stumbled on.

The tracks suddenly ended. Banks looked up. Dorlton was on his feet, swaying and moaning, unable to take a step. Richmond was a still, snow-covered mound at his feet.

Men from the fire came stamping out of the dark a few minutes after Banks. Together they tried to warm Dorlton and wake Richmond. The wind howled ceaselessly, driving snow into their eyes and cold into their marrows.

Finally Banks shouted an order to carry the helpless men. For a few steps they succeeded. Then, plunging into sink holes shoulder deep and tripping over branches meshed beneath the snow, they fell. Others began to suffer again and grow so weak themselves they had to be supported.

When they tried to start a fire every spark was blown down the wind and into the dark. In the end, Banks and those still able to help built a bed and shelter of birch boughs for Richmond and Dorlton. They placed the two unconscious men in its lee and packed snow about them. When it was finished they set off once again for the fire, where they spent the few hours that remained to the night.

Twelve men had left the *Endeavour* on a warm, sunny day.

Two now lay in the snow, slowly freezing to death. Another by the fire was near the end of his strength.

When dawn came through the solid sky, a field of untracked snow stretched as far from the camp as the eye could see. The tops of bushes showed like clumps of short grass above the surface. Icy blasts of wind still drove falling snow across the miserable group huddled about the fire.

By six in the morning stretches of cloud broke loose and showed sky. By eight sunlight shone through the gaps. The snow stopped at last.

Banks dug into the drift at his back and found the vulture he had shot in the dim past less than twenty-two hours before. Cutting its frozen carcass in ten pieces, he parceled it out to the men. Each cooked and ate his small share. When Banks was finished, he hurled the bones into the fire and stood up.

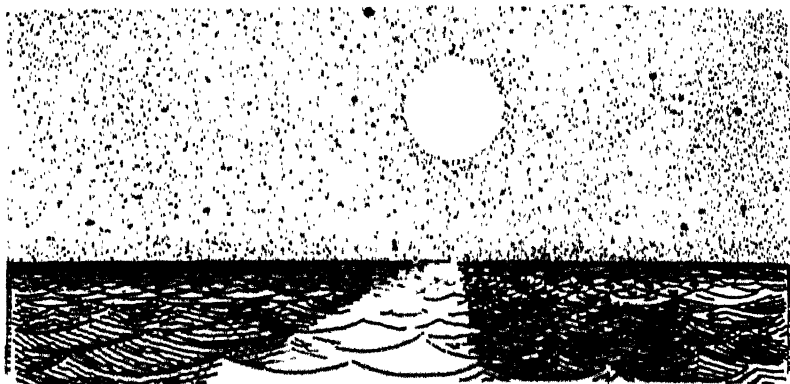
"Come, lads," he said, "we'll move out now."

When they found the bodies of Richmond and Dorlton beneath the birch branches, they dug through the snow to the swamp and deeper still. Praying aloud and silently cursing, they buried their dead.

Walking back toward the forest, Banks felt the sun fill him with warmth. Soon the snow would run in rivulets through the woods. It was a bitter warmth.

By one o'clock they were out of the woods and on the beach. A gun from the *Endeavour* had signaled and a boat was putting in toward shore.

As the ten weary men climbed quietly into the pinnace, Banks looked back toward the sodden meadow and up at the blue of the sky. It was a day as mild as May in England.



### *XIII. South Seas*

Waves rode the tops of long swells and broke in darkness under the *Endeavour's* sides.

"Two points off the starboard bow—there! Now you can see it. On the edge of the moon path."

"Aye, a dark lump bobbing. Is that all ye're hopping about, Monkhouse?"

"Mr. Gore, you've been a sailing man too long. When you were a child, did you never like to wander in green meadows, crawl among rocks, or dig caves in places where all the water there was came from a spring or perhaps a small stream? No, salt has been under your skin since birth and tanned it thick as a bull's hide. Two months it's been since we left Cape Horn. All we've seen in that time is an albatross or two, and sixteen days since we've seen the last of them. Two months of ocean. Not even a storm to play against—and you stand there like a great lump of ironwood when we see our first sign of land."

"Ye're a lubber for sure," Gore said, "snatching at driftwood for land. It's a deal of pleasure ye'll have ashore on that log."

"Log! Is it a log?" Monkhouse stumbled forward and out into



the leadsman's chains. "It is!" he shouted. "A tree, sure as that's ocean, it's floating in!"

"Aye," said Gore calmly, "there'll be land hereabouts."

"Well, don't be an idiot. You're officer of the watch. Do something about it. Tell the captain. Change course. Find out which way it's floating and then head the other way. Come on, man, we're headed for land!"

"It'll keep till morning, Mr. Monkhouse," Gore answered. "A floating tree is no channel buoy. We can't just leave it to larboard and sail into harbor."

Monkhouse stopped shouting. "You're right. You and your thick skin, you're right. But it's good to see something that's had its roots in earth." He paused and looked at Gore with a puzzled expression. "It must be a sight when you get excited. If your shell ever cracks, it'll be a loud explosion."

"I'm used to waiting out a long voyage," Gore said. "And I've sailed this far before, ye forget that. And worse than this, it was, by more than a little. When Wallis took us through Magellan's strait we were three months passing Tierra del Fuego alone. This time was a pleasure." Gore shook his head slowly. "Captain Cook took us around the Horn in thirty-three days. No, I'll not wake him in the middle of the night to tell him there's a tree trunk in our wake. He'll hear of it at dawn."

As it happened, Cook was awake. In his cabin the brass lamp swung slowly, moving his shadow back and forth across a chart on his writing table. The *Endeavour's* log lay open at his right.

Taking the ship's course from the log, Cook laid his parallel rulers on a compass rose drawn on the blank white paper of the ocean to the west. He walked the rulers across the chart until one edge rested on the position he had marked the night before. His pencil drew a light line along the ruler and his dividers

marked off the distance the *Endeavour* should have made good during the day at the speeds noted in the log. Then he joined the dots marking the actual position of the ship, taken by quadrant fixes at sundown the day before and at sundown a few hours before.

Cook put his pencil down and sat back. Across the chart two lines stretched more than seven hundred leagues into the Pacific, westward from Cape Horn. They crossed each other and separated here and there, but by and large they moved across the paper close together. Day by day Cook's dead-reckoning track clung to the actual track taken from readings of the sun.

There has been no current, Cook thought. If there had been the ship would have been carried off at an angle as she sailed, and the two tracks would have moved far apart on the chart. To himself he said, "There can be no continent here. It could lie farther to the west, but were it near or to the south, so large a land would swing a current across the sea. It would make little sense to search for a continent where there could be none." Carefully he closed the log, rose, and stowed it in a rack above his table. As he pulled the lamp down on its chain and blew it out he made a decision. "We'll find King George's Island and the transit of Venus first. Later, when we sail on west, we might find Dalrymple's dreamland, but not before."

There was seaweed in the water two days later, and within two weeks' time a cry from the masthead sent the words "Land! Land!" through the ship.

Within an hour all hands could see their first Pacific landfall, lying green and white in the blue ocean. It was an atoll, a low ring of coral sand and shrub surrounding an inner lagoon. At one end of its oval stood a large lonely tree, bare and still, like

the towers on the distant coast of England. Beside it two small palms waved in the breeze, like flags dipping from the tower's side. Through his glass Cook saw figures moving along the beach. The *Endeavour* bore in closer to the surf.

The cry of the leadsman rang through the excited talk of the men at the rail. "No bottom," he shouted as he hauled in the full length of his line, coiled it in his left hand, swung the lead, and heaved again. "No bottom."

"And no entrance to the lagoon, Captain," Hicks said.

"Little matter," Cook replied. "We've more than enough good Tierra del Fuego water to carry us to King George's Island."

"Not a stitch of cloth on any one of 'em," muttered a man near the rail. "You'd think the sun would parch their skins, like hogs on a spit."

"They're copper-colored at that," another answered. "Like good boot leather."

"And not what ye might call friendly, by the looks of them."

Along the beach tall figures kept easy pace with the *Endeavour*. Each carried a heavy club or a long, slender spear. Although the ship was too far from shore for the sounds from the beach to be heard, the brandished spears and clubs and the calm watchfulness of the islanders brought nervous thoughts to those on board.

"No bottom," sang the leadsman.

"Mr. Molyneaux," Cook said, "put her back on course. We'll proceed direct to King George's Island."

"I hope the people there are a mite more cheery than these," Monkhouse muttered to Gore.

"Ye'll find them pleasant enough," Gore answered. "They treated the *Dolphin* well—after the first bit of trouble was done with."

The cry of "Land hol" was heard often during the next few days, but Cook drove his ship westward without pause. On the morning of April 10, in the year 1769, after a noisy night of thunder, lightning, and rain, they passed the island Wallis had named Osnaburgh, leaving it five miles on their starboard hand. Because its shape, jutting from the sea like a high-crowned hat, identified it clearly with the Osnaburgh Wallis had found close by King George's Island, Cook knew he was near his first objective.

In the evening a great argument arose among all hands topside as to whether the deep shadow seen on the horizon was another thunderhead or the land they sought. The bos'n's mate, Reading, scoffed at all who held it was the island. "Ye're a shipful of lubbers with wheat in your hair and dust in your eyes. When ye've been to sea as long as I have, ye'll know a thundercloud when ye see one and not think every blasted thing is land."

Monkhouse wagered it was King George's Island—a good linen shirt against Molyneaux's sealskin.

Cook turned to Banks. "With the air light and our way slow, we'll not settle the argument until sunset." Then, as night blacked out the horizon, he went below.

With the dawn Reading was silenced and Monkhouse won the sealskin. Blue on the horizon, tall and massive in the morning light, were the peaks of the island Wallis had called King George the Third's. Even from the distance its heights showed plumes of cloud.

On the *Endeavour's* quarterdeck, in her waist, along her fore-castle rail, and in the high reaches of her rigging, men stood silent at the prospect of their landfall.

As the sun rose the breeze died to a calm broken only by

the creak of rigging that swayed slowly with the ocean swell.

Three dawns later the *Endeavour* still lay hull-down from the island. But while sleepy-eyed men were climbing companion-way ladders and muttering at the delay, a light wind rose. Slowly the ship gathered way, hauled around to her course, and made for the distant mountains. By eleven o'clock the lookout aloft could see the sloping forests at the base of the hills and a thin white line of beach at the water's edge.

A cry from the foretop brought Cook's glass around to the most western point of land visible off the starboard bow. "Hello, the deck! Canoes off the western point. Making toward us."

Cook made out several long, narrow craft coming swiftly toward the *Endeavour*, driven by indistinct figures swinging paddles.

"Mr. Hicks," Cook said, "pass the word that, should the islanders approach, they are to be treated with every courtesy. There shall be no trouble started by any man aboard."

The ship moved slowly, lumbering in the light breeze and long swells, but in a short time eight canoes flashed about it in a broad semicircle. Some were small, perhaps twenty feet long, and narrower than a man's shoulders. Across each hull was lashed a pair of spars carrying a larger crosspiece, which rode lightly on the water at a distance from the canoe itself. Balanced by these outriggers, they rode high and light, moving rapidly at each stroke of the paddles.

Others were double canoes, more than forty feet long. Resting on spars between the two hulls were platforms mounting masts and triangular sails. The stern of each curved upward to a carved peak.

On thwarts across the smaller canoes and on the platforms of the larger sat island men. They were tall and well proportioned,

neither heavy nor thin. Ease, grace, and quick strength showed with every dip and sweep of their paddles. Their skin was brown—a glowing brown lighter and brighter than many a weather-beaten English face that peered at them from the side of the ship. Their faces were framed in long, shiny, black hair falling in even waves to their shoulders.

“Magnificent!” said Banks. “A beautiful people.”

Beside him Monkhouse sighed. “They make me feel like a white worm dredged from the bottom of a well—wizened, bald, wrinkled, and weak. Are they ageless?”

“I assume,” said Banks, laughing, “that these are picked men—young warriors possibly—sent to look us over.”

“Which they are doing with great thoroughness,” Monkhouse replied.

From the quarterdeck Cook called Gore to him. “Mr. Gore, you have some acquaintance with these people. Can you persuade them to approach?”

Gore went to the rail, cupped his hands, and shouted one of the few words he had learned on his voyage with Wallis.

“Taio, taiol!” he called, beckoning the canoes to come closer.

For some time there was no answer. The islanders paddled easily, holding their craft a hundred yards off the *Endeavour’s* beam. At last the two leading canoes swung around in a long curve and approached the ship.

“Taio, taiol!” called Gore. The islanders paddled nearer.

“Mr. Banks,” Cook asked, “can you identify the plants in the canoes?”

“The branches I cannot,” Banks answered. “The others seem very like the young plantains Wallis described as growing into a tree bearing excellent fruit. I am anxious to study them more closely.”

The islanders moved close under the ship, answering Gore's hail with smiles and gestures. Some held branches and plantains high in the air and called out in the words of a melodic language.

"Lower a line and ladder," Cook ordered.

Over the side spun a coil of line and the roll of a Jacob's ladder. Ignoring the ladder, the islanders swiftly secured sprigs and branches to the line and paddled a few yards off, shouting and pointing to the rigging.

Cook looked up and gave an order. "Up with them, Molyneaux."

When the *Endeavour's* rigging was decorated with branches, the islanders gave shouts of pleasure, crying, "Taio, taio," and dug their paddles into the sea. Swiftly they left the ship and headed for the western point of land, now clearly visible from the deck.

The ship sailed her sluggish way in and, looking somewhat like a portly London lady with plumes in her hair, rounded the point and entered a wide bay. With her foresails backed to kill her motion she swung gradually into the breeze. She was deep in the bay when the order was given to let go the anchor.

With the last rattle of the chain, Cook turned the ship over to Molyneaux, walked to the rail, and gazed silently at the shore. That night he would write in the log the date, April 13, 1769, the time of day, the weather, and the depth of the water at their anchorage.

Captain Cook looked down the deck where his men had gathered to watch the islanders. For a moment perhaps a heavy load lifted from his spirit and he felt almost gay. Perhaps some day he would tell Bess what it meant to lead a small ship for months on a landless ocean, most of it uncharted, none of it

known well, to bring that ship and its men to its first objective, and hear the anchor rumble into a quiet bay.

There were more than a hundred canoes now, brightly colored, each full to the gunwales with fruit, coconuts, and fish. There was much shouting. He listened, then walked forward.

"Mr. Gore," he said, pointing toward the nearest canoe, "there's one that calls you by name, and Molyneaux too, if 'Bob' is what he's called. Don't ignore them. We need friends here."

In the stern of one of the largest canoes sat a tall, gray-haired native. He raised his arm toward them as Gore and Molyneaux turned. "Taora," the islander called. "Taora, Boba." A smile crossed his face.

"It's Owha'a," shouted Gore. Then he and Molyneaux, almost in one breath, called across the water, "Owha'a, taio, taio, friend, friend."

"A strong old man, and good," Molyneaux said. "Chief of the land to the east of the bay, as I remember."

Cook nodded and looked closely at the man who was both a chief and a friend.

No sooner had Owha'a's greeting been answered than all the canoes came close aboard. With much shouting, passing of lines, and not a little misunderstanding, trading with the English sailors began. Iron nails, which seemed of great value to the natives, bits of colored cloth, and beads were passed down to the paddlers, who fixed fish, fruit, or coconuts to lines to be hauled on board the *Endeavour* in exchange. Once, in return for a short knife, a pig was dragged, trussed and squealing, to the deck.

Cook watched for a time, then spoke again to Gore and Molyneaux. "A friendly people. I am told they have many ways



that differ from ours. We must make our ways known without doubt, but we must learn and understand theirs as well. This is their land."

The two men nodded.

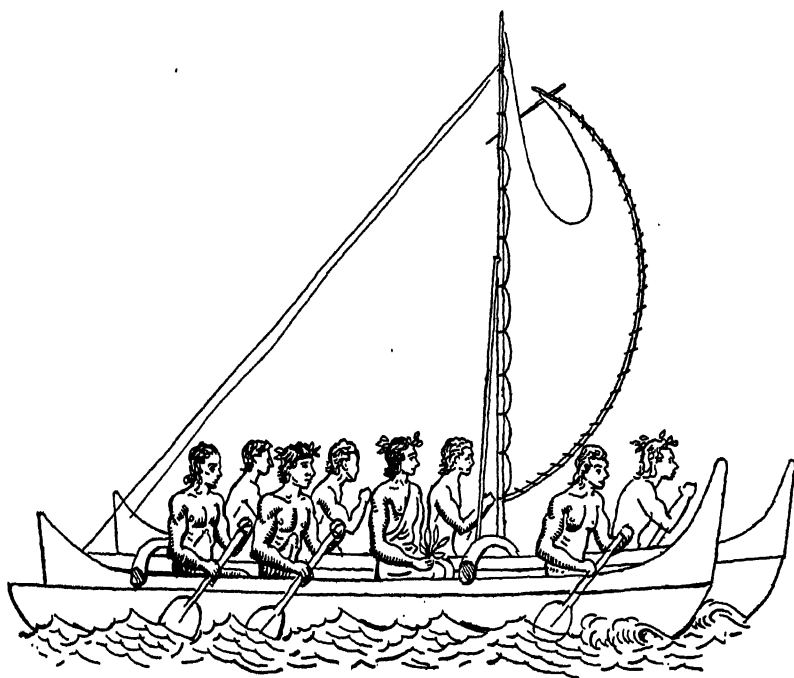
"What do they call this bay?" Cook asked.

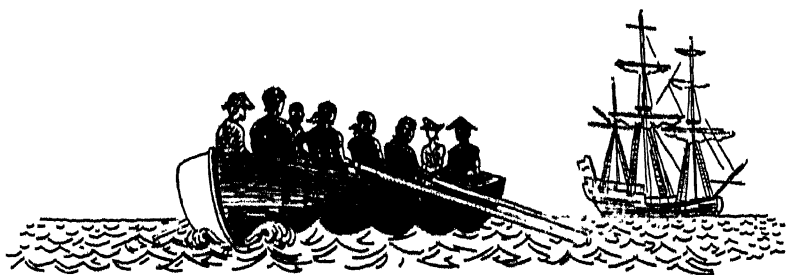
"Matavai."

"And the island itself?"

"Tahiti."

"Then it will go in the log and on the chart that we have anchored in Matavai Bay on the island of Tahiti. Though we'll leave a mark here for England and King George, it is the land of the Tahitians."





## *XIV. Tahiti*

When the ship was secure at anchor and the in-port watch posted, Cook called away the first shore party. Together with Banks, Solander, Monkhouse, Gore, Molyneaux and a party of men, he climbed down to the small boat and set out for the beach.

"Mr. Gore," Cook said, "signal your friend Owha'a to come with us. It might be to our advantage to land with a friendly chief at our side."

In answer to Gore's signal, Owha'a's canoe came alongside their boat and moved toward the shore with them. Directly ahead the water of Matavai rolled to a coral beach. Beyond, a green level of coconut palms and fruit trees stretched back toward a brilliantly colored jungle. Near the beach the forest was broken by patches of garden land where smaller plants grew in irregular strips. To the east and west swept the even curve of Matavai Bay. Behind the lowland slopes a great brown mountain loomed into the clouds, eight thousand feet above the coral beach.

Cook suppressed a gasp. A man felt small here, an insignificant spot in a tremendous scene. No man's eye, he felt, especially one used to the smaller blends of England, the continuous sea, or even the rock coasts of the Americas, could hold all this in a glance.

His eyes leaped from the beach to the highest peak. Not until he made a second, slower examination did he notice that the mountain was part of a jagged range cut by deep gorges. Dark with jungle, high valleys broke off abruptly at cliffs near the sea where streams fell in thin waterfalls into the forest below.

It was Monkhouse who broke the silence. "A new land," he said. "A speck on the sea—aye, a tiny speck to fill the eye and keep it from seeing our old lands in the old way again."

Cook started. He turned toward the beach. "Come a few points to larboard. Bring us in there," he directed the helmsman, "where that group of men is waiting."

He wondered what sort of welcome he and his uninvited Englishmen would find when they stepped on Tahitian land. The Tahitians had been friendly enough on the bay and Owha'a had seemed pleased to see Gore and Molyneaux, but Wallis had reported trouble and even fighting when he first landed. He wondered also why there were no women among those on the shore.

His wondering was short. Before the boat caught the last wave and rode in on the sand, a shouting crowd of Tahitians on the beach rushed knee-deep into the water, crying, "Taio, taio!" By now Cook had learned the meaning of those words. They were the first he had heard and they meant "friend."

Tahitians surrounded them as they stepped from the boat. Cook felt he had seen no smile so welcome as that of the tall Tahitian who thrust a plantain, gleaming green and wet with

sea water, into his hand. Silently he accepted it and, watching Molyneaux, thrust it into his belt and smiled his thanks.

Owha'a stepped forward and raised his arm. The Tahitians moved back and became silent.

Cook could not understand Owha'a's words. It was a melodious language, full of soft vowels, broken now and then by a catch in the throat, as though, for example in the chief's own name, the *a* at its end was split by a breath trapped in the middle of its sound and then let go to finish what it started.

Although he could not understand the words, Cook understood the meaning of Owha'a's speech. It was full of pleasure at seeing them. It told, with many graceful gestures, of the *Endeavour's* sailing into Matavai with branches of friendship in her rigging and of men who would give a bit of iron in exchange for coconuts.

Owha'a said the word "taio" again, then, turning toward Gore, he said, "Taora," as though it were a name they all remembered. "Boba," he went on, pointing at Molyneaux and then gesturing toward the ship in the bay and back to the group on the beach.

At the mention of his name, Molyneaux stepped forward. "Boba," he said, placing his hand on his chest, "taio," and, sweeping his arm toward the hills and on to the end of the land they could see, he smiled and said in English, "Taora and Boba are happy to be with you again." He turned toward Cook and made what was almost a bow. He pointed toward the *Endeavour*, made a gesture that included all the Englishmen, and ended with his arm outstretched, palm up, toward Cook.

"Ari'i," he said, "chief—Captain—Captain Cook."

Owha'a understood at once. He pointed toward Cook. "Tapene Tute, Tapene Tute"—Captain Cook, Captain Cook.

It was the end of formal greetings. Tahitians pressed around the English, keeping a respectful distance from Cook, the *ari'i* of the white men. Presents were exchanged. More sprigs of plantain were slipped into English belts; coconuts were received, and nails, glass beads, and shirts became Tahitian possessions.

When Cook and Owha'a led the way up the beach toward the trees, their exploration became a procession, with English sailors and Tahitian men crowding in behind their leaders.

They made their way through groves of breadfruit and coconut trees on paths that led in every direction, crisscrossing in woods cleared of underbrush. Occasionally Cook saw houses through the trees. Each home was alone, with its own garden, its own entrance path, and its own area of trees. Nowhere did he see a group of houses that might be called a village.

After following a path inland, then bearing east, parallel to the beach, Owha'a led them back to a point from which they could see the eastern shore of Matavai Bay.

Molyneaux pointed toward the area ahead and said to Owha'a, using a combination of Tahitian words, English sentences, and gestures which Owha'a seemed to understand, "Your place, Hitia'a? As I remember it you are chief—*ari'i*—in Hitia'a?"

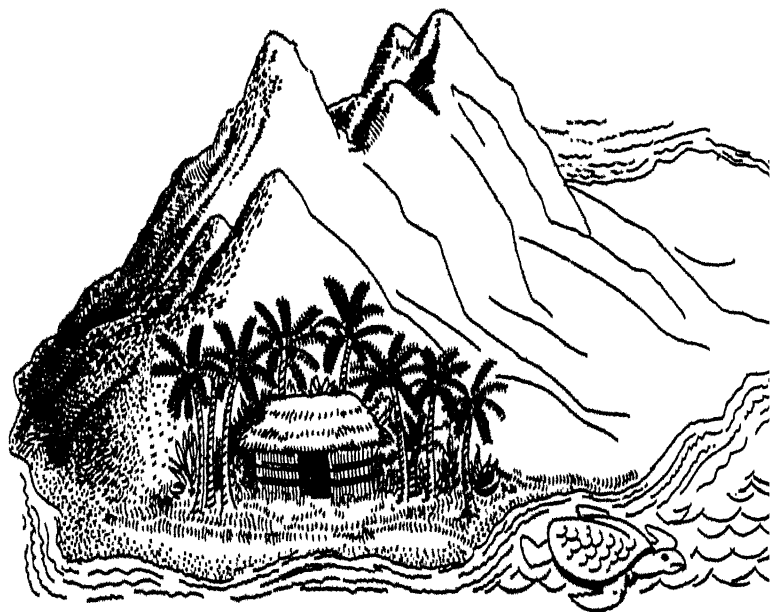
Carefully and slowly Owha'a spoke. He told them with his hands and his words that he was no longer chief of that part of Matavai. His son had grown since Taora and Boba had been there before. His son was now chief. He himself was nothing more than an old man.

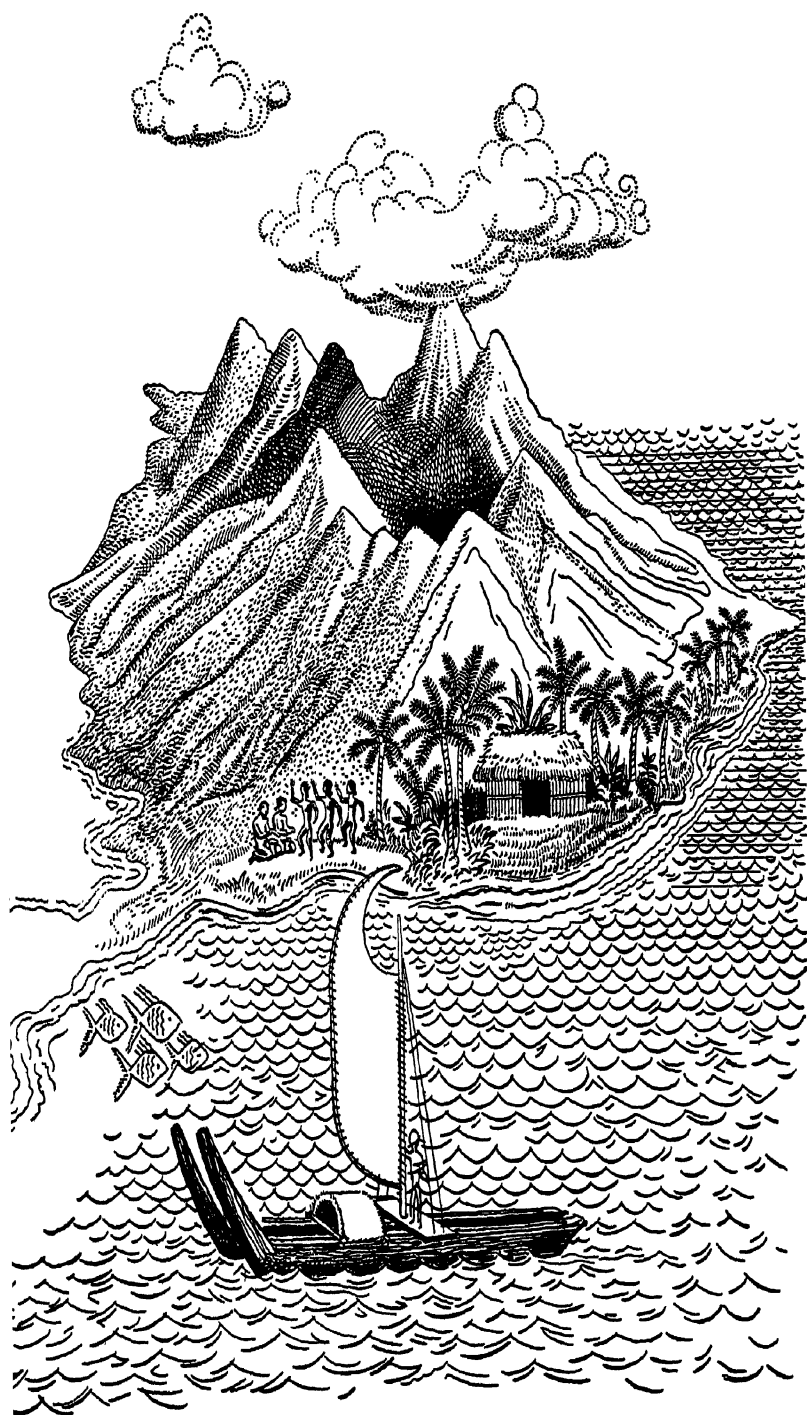
Cook found himself able to understand the eloquent motions of the arms and body that accompanied the Tahitian words. He was beginning to learn the language. Stooping to pick up a stick,

he motioned Owha'a to watch him. Carefully, remembering Wallis's chart, he drew an outline of Tahiti in the sandy earth. On the farthest northern tangent he indicated the indentation of Matavai Bay and placed a stone off the shore to represent the *Endeavour's* position.

When he finished he pointed to the land east of the bay. "Iitia'a. Owha'a chief—ari'i." Then he indicated Matavai and looked inquiringly at the old chief.

Owha'a understood at once. He took the stick from Cook and drew an imaginary line around the area near the bay. "Ari'i Tupurai-Tamaiti." He went on to describe the man who was chief of Matavai. Cook understood well enough to realize that Tupurai-Tamaiti was a fine man. Owha'a's smile told him that.





Next Cook asked who was chief of the whole island, making a circle around all the land he had drawn as he spoke. Owha'a first took the stick and corrected the map in a few places. Tahiti, it turned out, consisted of two roughly circular islands joined by a short, narrow neck. One of the two sections was smaller than the other, so that the whole looked like a distorted figure eight.

Using the map, Owha'a told them that the island was loosely ruled by a great chief, an ari'i-rahi. Under him were many local chiefs. What interested Cook most was that there seemed to be trouble among the various chiefs mentioned by Owha'a. What the trouble was about he did not understand, nor could he remember the names of each. But the fact that there was trouble on the island might mean trouble for the *Endeavour* and the expedition. He determined to find out more about it later, when he had learned the language well enough to talk with some ease.

A few hundred yards from the place where Cook and Owha'a had drawn the chart in the earth, they were met by another group of Tahitians. Again presents and greetings were exchanged. Being urged on from all sides, Cook and Owha'a walked along a path that led to a clearing. There, seated beneath a palm tree, was a gigantic Tahitian. By the actions of the crowd, Cook knew him to be a man of importance.

At once Owha'a presented him. He was Tupurai-Tamaiti, chief of Matavai. Cook guessed him to be three inches over six feet in height, but when the chief rose, Cook knew that he had underestimated his size.

Beside him he heard Monkhouse mutter to himself. "I'll name him Hercules. 'Tis easier to the tongue and more fitting as a description than his own twelve-pound name."



The chief received them with great friendship, presented them with fish and coconuts, invited them to sit near him, and ordered food to be prepared. He showed great curiosity concerning English clothing, buttons and pockets fascinating him especially. When Banks brought out a silver box and carefully inserted a pinch of snuff in one nostril, Tupurai-Tamaiti asked to examine it. He did so with sober concentration, carefully sniffing at its contents. After sneezing violently and making a sour face he returned it to Banks, who replaced it in his pocket.

The chief pointed to the pocket, clapped his hand to his side as though to close it tight, and made warning gestures toward his people, smiling as he spoke. Cook understood. It was a warning against theft. It seemed odd to him that the chief should act as though it were a normal action to have one's pocket picked.

There was much talk between the Englishmen and their Tahitian host, and, while it went on in halting but understandable speeches, Cook had an opportunity to look around.

For the first time he noticed women and children on the outskirts of the noisy audience around their chief and his white visitors. They were of fair skin, somewhat shorter than their men but not always smaller in bulk. A few of the younger ones were slender and handsome, even to visitors who thought of women in terms of English profiles.

They wore carefully woven hats or turbans of human hair wound around and piled high. About their waists were skirts of stiff cloth made of pounded tree bark and decorated with soft brown designs. Over their shoulders fell the folds of bark-cloth cloaks. In spite of the fact that he had never seen dress to compare with this, Cook felt that they were an attractive sight and that his European clothes were oddly out of place in Tahiti.

With many gestures of pleasure the meeting ended. Cook rose and presented Tupurai-Tamaiti with a looking-glass and received promises of a return visit and gifts of pigs to freshen the diet on board the *Endeavour*.

"Eh! My snuff-box!" Banks suddenly exclaimed. "It's gone."

At once the Englishmen clapped their hands to their pockets. "My spy-glass too," muttered Solander.

"Ah, a beautiful, friendly, thieving people," said Monkhouse. "We've been caught like coney."

There was muttering and a gathering of dark looks among the English. A sailor raised his musket to ready, and those near him heard the click of the hammer.

Cook turned suddenly to his own men. "Make no move! Lower that musket!" Then, when he had been obeyed, he said slowly and quietly, "Ease yourselves, loosen your muscles—and your minds. This is no matter for violence, and a worse time." He smiled as easily as he could. "The next man," he went on in a gentle voice, "who makes a threatening move will receive the lash."

The Tahitians had fallen silent, open wonder in their faces. Tupurai-Tamaiti stepped forward, spreading his arms wide, a flick of smile at the corners of his mouth. What, he seemed to ask, had happened to his friends? His smile seemed to say that he knew and thought it unimportant.

Indicating Banks, Cook made gestures as though he were taking snuff, shaping a box with his hand, then opening it to show that it was gone. He repeated his motions and added English words to indicate the loss of Solander's spy-glass. There was a murmuring among the Tahitians as they understood.

Tupurai-Tamaiti was silent for a moment, then he walked off a short way among his people, called them to him, and began

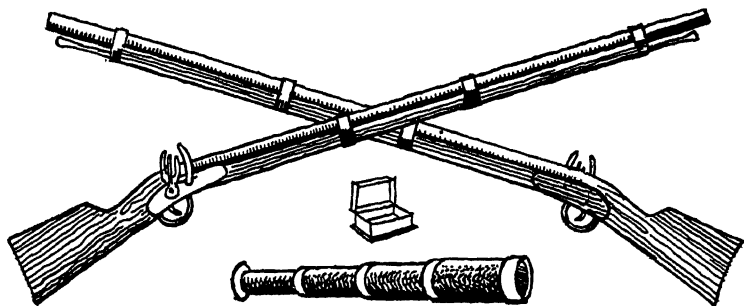
to speak. Cook heard the word "tapu" as the chief reached to take something from a man near him. The same word was repeated as another man stepped forward.

Gore whispered that anything "tapu" was sacred to the chiefs, forbidden to the people.

With a bearing of majestic pleasure Tupurai-Tamaiti returned through his people and stood before Cook. In his hand he held the snuff-box and spy-glass.

As Owha'a led the way back through the trees to the waiting small boat, Cook thought of what he had seen and what had happened. To the Tahitians it had been a small matter. He must make it seem so to the English and at the same time take measures that would teach the Tahitians that stealing from the white men would be neither easy nor pleasant.

"We must learn their ways if we are to succeed," he said aloud. "And they must learn ours. Above all, we must not leap to action whenever Tahitian ways clash with ours. Understanding cannot be accomplished in a passing instant or in the flash of a musket."





## *XV. Fort Venus and the Chiefs*

Cook stood with Banks outside the main tent of the stockade of Fort Venus. From all sides he could hear the crash of axes on palm wood, the grate of shovels in sand, and the ring of hammers against iron. To the west he looked across an earthen bank topped by a row of sharpened upright logs to the beach of Matavai Bay. Beyond, warped in close, lay the *Endeavour*. He noted the lay of her guns and saw with satisfaction that they commanded the length of the sand spit from the new fort at its outer tip to the woods inland.

Turning toward the east, he saw that work on the double wall of sand-filled casks was almost complete. The wall was protection from attack down the stream that flowed from the forest, past the east embankment of Fort Venus, and into the sea through a small delta near the north wall.

Outside the enclosure, at the foot of its stockade, was a ditch six feet deep and ten feet wide. Inside, tents had been pitched for Banks and his scientists, for the armorer's shop, for tradesmen, and for the marine guard.

"It is nigh complete," he said. "A solid, secure fort."

"It is most certainly that," Banks said, "but have you not been overcautious? The Tahitians have behaved well toward us.

Now, with their language less strange and ourselves able to converse with them, I find them delightful. They have their unusual customs, true enough, and their high emotions, but they have been good friends."

"Aye," Cook answered. "They are so. They've given us food in return for bits and dabs. They've shown us watering places, entertained us, honored our needs, permitted us to cut their trees and take a commanding position on land. And to the men they've been more generous than the people of an English port."

"Then," said Banks, "granting they have a few thoughts on private property not to our liking, why have we so imposing a fort?"

"In part," Cook replied, "because by being imposing to the Tahitians it stands better for law and a semblance of order in our trade with them. And it secures our goods, especially our observation instruments, from thieves." He paused and paced a few steps from the tent, watching a sailor bartering with a Tahitian woman for a piece of native bark cloth.

"But the Tahitians," he went on, "have not caused the building of Fort Venus. No, I do not fear them. It is ourselves who give me concern." Leaving Banks, Cook walked across the enclosure and went out the north gate.

Banks was still deep in thought when a loud shout, followed by the sound of many voices, came from the direction of the main gate. Suddenly Chief Tupurai-Tamaiti ran into the square, looked about quickly, then dashed toward the tent. Seizing Banks by the arm, the chief half dragged him back through the gate, shouting as he ran.

His dignity gone, his ruffles flying, Banks went. From the half-strangled words of the huge man beside him and from the violence of the strength he felt in the hand on his arm, he

knew the Tahitian was in no mood for argument or explanation.

Five hundred yards from the fort, not far from the house Tupurai-Tamaiti had set up for his wife and himself, they stopped short. Standing in the trail ahead was the *Endeavour's* butcher. In one hand he carried a meat hook.

Immediately Tupurai-Tamaiti began to roar in a mixture of Tahitian and English, accompanied by explosive gestures. "Kill Tomio!" he shouted, pointing at the butcher. He grasping Banks by the shoulder with one hand and with the other made a slicing motion across his throat.

"He kill Tomio!" Suddenly the huge man groaned and tears ran from his eyes. Slowly the butcher began to edge his way past, saying nothing. A long brown arm shot past Banks and halted the man in his tracks.

"Hold on," Banks said. "If this man has made trouble with you, tell me what it is."

Tupurai-Tamaiti began to explain. The butcher had come to his house and had been received by Tomio, Tupurai-Tamaiti's wife. The white man had offered to buy a stone hatchet for an iron nail. Tomio had indicated that the hatchet was not for sale. The butcher had thrown down the nail, seized the hatchet, and had been threatening Tomio with the meat hook when, he, Tupurai-Tamaiti, had arrived on the scene.

"He is one of you or I would kill him," said the big Tahitian. "You are different from us. Your ari'i punishes for all. Because I knew this I did not kill. I came to you."

"You did well," Banks said. To himself he guessed what would have happened on the island of Tahiti had the Tahitian chief carried out his own justice. "We will take the man to Captain Cook. Bring Tomio; bring your people; bring the stone hatchet. We will show you how we do what must be done."

On board the *Endeavour* some time later, Cook found himself suddenly the center of a high court. With the arrival of Banks, the ship's butcher, and Tupurai-Tamaiti, all trading stopped.

Banks opened the case by telling the story as the chief had told it to him. The butcher explained that he had offered a fair price for the hatchet.

"They've been jackin' their prices too blasted high," he said. "I was goin' by the rules of trade ye laid down for us, Captain, and she wouldn't give it me."

"Was it her wish to part with the ax?" Cook asked.

"She acted high an' mighty. They're gettin' above themselves, they are. 'Twas like she owned the place, refusin' to sell me the ax."

Cook was silent for a full minute. Then, raising his voice to reach all the crowd, he said, "This land is the land of the Tahitians. We go to their homes as guests. We trade with them for that which they wish to trade. They are our friends." Turning to the butcher, he added, "You are a thief." Cook looked up and repeated the word "thief."

"Bos'n," he called, "a dozen lashes."

Near the rail a grating was secured to the shrouds. On this the butcher was spread-eagled, bound wrists and ankles. The bos'n's whip hand rose and the tails of the lash sighed through the air. They made a sharp crack and left long red welts.

There was a gasp from the Tahitians. With the second lash the bound man cried out. Suddenly Tomio burst from the crowd and rushed toward Cook. Tears streamed from her eyes. "No," she cried, "no more."

Cook hesitated. The bos'n held his whip high.

"You are good," Cook said to Tomio. "Your people are kind—

'kind without the ways we have made for ourselves and which seem strange to you. We have a different life with tabus necessary to it. This man has broken a tabu of the white men—haoles. By harming you he has harmed us all. It is our way to punish any who harm even one." Tomio said nothing. Cook knew she did not understand.

"Bos'n," he said, "there are ten lashes remaining. Complete your strokes."

The Tahitians wept throughout the whipping, but when the man was released and had stumbled below to be eased by Monkhouse's salves, their tears dried, laughter returned, and trade resumed as though nothing had happened.

Cook went about his duties, checking supplies, ordering the repainting of the long boat and the weaving of new lines where old ones showed rot or wear. As he worked he thought of the scene just past. It had served good purpose. It had shown the Tahitians an English method and perhaps had given a few ideas to the free and easy pickpockets among them. Better, it had served to warn his own men against actions that might endanger the expedition.

He had learned something himself. Tahitians were quick to anger and quick to forgive. Tupurai-Tamaiti's fury had been great. Tomio's tears had been genuine, he felt. Yet the gaiety that followed had been both quick and real. It served him well to know these things about the Tahitians.

That he had more to learn he discovered a little later. He was talking to Hicks about the work of the day when Molyneaux arrived on board. "Captain," Molyneaux said, "here's a woman of importance to match her size. Found her holding something of a court in Mr. Banks's tent ashore. Name's Purea. To my way of thinking she's someone you'd prefer to know. She—"



Before Cook could learn more a swarm of Tahitian men and women climbed over the rail and moved in stately procession across the deck toward him. At the head of the group he saw an immense woman, leading the rest like a galleon towing small boats.

Fully six feet tall, she weighed, to Cook's eye, three hundred pounds. Yet she moved across the deck with long, graceful strides, leaving her retainers in her wake.

Quickly Cook formed his reception. She was no ordinary person, that he knew. Walking beside her, he showed her about the ship. She examined the wheel and turned a heavy capstan without effort. She gazed at the rigging and at the fresh branches lashed to the spars. Manila lines were caressed by her hands—hands that astonished Cook by their grace and delicacy. Each knuckle, he noticed, bore a curious tattoo in the shape of the English letter Z.

He led her finally to his cabin. The brass lamp caught her eye. Drawers and chests were opened, revealing their contents. From the chest beneath his bunk Cook took a dark blue cloak lined with crimson silk. Bowing, he held it toward Purea. With a broad, slow smile she took it, fingering its texture. When she draped it over her shoulders it was a move of majesty. Cook silently gave thanks that he was a tall man. The cloak fitted well enough, although it would never be drawn close across Purea's massive breast.

Next he presented her with a small child's doll, cheap enough in a London shop, but to Purea it was a thing of instant delight. Cradling it in her massive arms, she showed it to her followers. Their gasps of astonishment seemed to please her.

Nothing would do, she announced, but that the white *ari'i* must come ashore, where she would return his generosity.

Then, with her Royal Navy cloak flowing in the breeze and her doll in her arms, she swept up the companionway, across the deck, and over the rail to a waiting canoe. With Cook at her side, she directed the paddlers to carry them across the bay.

They landed near a group of large canoes drawn up on the beach and guarded by Tahitian men. Purea ordered that a large hog, many breadfruit, and a rare gift of fish be unloaded and carried to the fort for formal present-making.

The procession formed a line of march along the coral beach. At its head tall Tahitian men carried the hog slung from a pole, breadfruit, fish, and coconuts in palm-leaf baskets. Cook and Purea brought up the rear.

They had covered half the distance to the fort when Cook noticed a second group of Tahitians watching from the trees on their right. Near them stood a square-built man, his deep chest and heavy shoulders all the more impressive because he was shorter than many of his followers. His face was without expression. Cook noticed that although Purea ignored the man she loosened her grasp on her cloak, permitting its crimson lining to open in the sun.

At this the man stepped forward and held up his hand. The procession halted.

"Tapene Tute," the man said in a deep voice. "Tapene Tute ari'i-rahi haole"—great chief of the white man. Indicating himself, he went on, "Tutaha, ari'i-rahi Tahiti." He drew a circle in the air that took in all the land, the water, and the sky.

Purea grunted. "My son, Marii, ari'i-rahi Tahiti. Tutaha ari'i-rahi no more. Tapene Tute taio Purea." She smiled with great satisfaction and triumph.

Cook knew he had come to the heart of the trouble between chiefs. There was one chief for all the island, the ari'i-rahi—

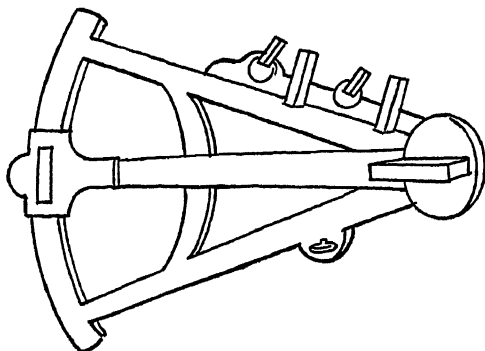
Owha'a had explained that. But more than one chief claimed to be the ari'i-rahi, and Cook held power. He could give iron for knives or cloaks that would impress a chief's followers. Better than that, his guns could kill from a distance. Both Purea and Tutaha wanted his friendship as a weapon against the other.

Quickly he made his decision. Both sides would be his friends. He had not come to fight. He stepped toward Tutaha, made a short speech of welcome and praise, and invited him to visit the *Endeavour*.

If Tutaha was pleased, Purea was not. She reached beneath her cloak and brought out the doll. Showing it to Tutaha, she smiled. Tutaha's hands, held out before him, opened and closed angrily.

"Blast!" said Cook. "The man's jealous as an old woman. What use on earth has he, a chief carrying a club and fighting for power, with a small child's doll?"

Nothing would do, in the end, but that another doll must be brought from the ship and presented to Tutaha. Neither he nor Purea seemed to like the equal division of presents, but they had no choice. With iron, guns, presents, and the fort at the head of Matavai Bay, Cook held the key to peace between them. While he was there they could compete for his favor. While he gave it equally to both they could not fight.



## *XVI. The Stolen Quadrant*

Several incidents, some of them serious, took place during the preparations for the observation of Venus. A Tahitian was shot and killed while running from the fort with a musket snatched from the hands of the sentry at the gate. With his death the Tahitians deserted Matavai, leaving Owha'a alone faithful to his friendship with the English.

Cook explained to the old chief, "We do not kill from hate. I have ordered my men not to shoot unless their lives are in danger. We did not cause the man's death, even though we fired the gun. His stealing caused his death. He was not killed because he was a Tahitian. Against him alone we had quarrel. To you, Owha'a, and to all your people we are friends."

Owha'a listened in silence. Then he spoke. "It is true, we have different ways. You have done what is right. To us, in our way, a man owns little. When another steals from him it is of no matter to others. The man who loses must decide. He may punish if he can. If so, good. If not, good. It is a private matter. You have punished. It is between you and the man who stole from you. We are friends. I will tell my people.

"Taio, taio," he said before he went into the forest. The next day the Tahitians came back to Matavai.

Another event occurred that was not as serious as death, although Tupurai-Tamaiti thought for a while it was death. Cook heard about it from Banks.

"I was in my tent," Banks said, "cataloguing vegetables—you know my habit in the mornings—when in she comes, Tomio, Tupurai-Tamaiti's wife, moaning that her husband was dying. Nothing would do but I must go with her. She seized me by the arm, in fact. I went, right enough, and on the run, when she wailed that Tupurai was dying of food given him by one of our sailors.

"We found him in his hut. He was curled up in a great lump, moaning and groaning with his head against a post. Couldn't get a word out of him. I was worried, especially about its being food given him by one of the men. That could have started trouble. Finally, though, Tomio stopped her weeping long enough to bring me something all wrapped round with palm leaves. It was what was left of the poison, she said. Tupurai'd eaten the rest.

"When I opened it I couldn't keep from smiling. A blessed fact, it was, that the chief himself was too busy with his stomach to notice me laughing at his misery. Wrapped in the palm leaf like it was a morsel of pig's heart was half a plug of tobacco. Oh, I knew how his insides felt, but I knew he'd live.

"No doubt he'd seen someone take a bite and hold it a long time, not noticing that spitting is a necessary evil in the business of chewing tobacco. And I could see from what was left he'd taken half the plug at a bite. It was an easy matter after that. Solemn as an owl, I ordered doses of coconut milk. In an hour or so he was through with it and happy as a three-weeks'

lamb. Spent the rest of the day celebrating his reprieve from death. Never saw a bigger mountain of joy than Tupurai."

Although Cook had smiled at Banks's story, he did not smile at what happened a short time later. The quadrant was stolen. It was the instrument saved for the observation of the transit of Venus, the chief purpose, according to the Royal Society, of his visit to Tahiti.

It was nine o'clock in the morning of May 2 when Cook called Green to him and went ashore to set up the quadrant, a full month before Venus was scheduled to cross between the earth and the sun. He wanted, in his careful way, to find the best location, to adjust the instrument, and practice taking sights so that when the third day of June arrived all would be ready for science.

The quadrant had never been out of its London packing case. The heavy box had been stored in a corner of a tent, not five yards from the paces of a marine sentry inside the stockade.

When Cook and Green arrived at the tent they threw back the canvas tarpaulin. The quadrant was gone.

"Sentry!" Cook shouted.

"Aye, aye, Captain." The sentry appeared at the tent flap.

"The quadrant—where is it?"

"It was there, Captain, last night when I made my rounds."

Cook had no time to waste. Within the past twelve hours the most valuable of their instruments had been stolen. Time was more important now than discipline.

"Bring Mr. Banks and call the captain of Marines," he ordered. "When the captain has relieved you, return to the ship and place yourself under arrest." Cook's voice, low until now, cracked like a musket. "Now go!"

A few moments later Banks entered the tent, his coattails

flying. "What blundering idiot permitted this thing? I'll slice the ears from his head!"

"We've only a month," groaned Green; "a month before the transit. What's to be done?"

"Search the entire island if necessary," Cook replied. "Banks, make up a party, a small party that can travel swiftly without exciting the Tahitians. Start now. Find Tupurai-Tamaiti. He thinks he owes you his life. He'll help."

"On the instant," Banks answered. "We'll rout out the thief. Here"—he motioned to a midshipman standing by—"you come with me."

"Mr. Green," Cook said, "you go with them. The Tahitians will have dismantled the quadrant for its metal. You know its parts."

Tucking a small pistol in each pocket, Banks set off at a trot, the midshipman and the astronomer at his heels. Before they had disappeared, Cook was making other assignments.

The bos'n's mate, Reading—sober that early in the day—was put in charge of the longboat, with orders to cruise the mouth of Matavai Bay and prevent canoes from leaving.

"Permit no one to leave the area," Cook commanded, "until the quadrant is found. This is an order applying to all with one exception. The chief, Tutaha, must not be detained. He is to remain free to go and come as he chooses. With all others remain firm, but fire no shots except in warning or self-defense."

Cook himself led a search party into the forest near the camp. The packing case was heavy. It was possible it had been concealed nearby to wait until the excitement subsided.

Banks found Tupurai-Tamaiti at his temporary home on the bay. Quickly he explained to the chief that an object of great

value had been stolen. The chief smiled happily and announced that he knew where it might be. Beckoning, he led the three Englishmen off through the trees. Their way went gradually inland, forcing them through tangled brush, over low hills below the mountains, and across cold, jungle streams. They had gone about four miles when Banks paused, mopped his brow, and spoke to the midshipman.

"It is possible we're wasting time, but I've a feeling old Tupurai knows what he's about. Go back and show the captain where we've gone. Unless I miss my guess he's worrying more than a little and thinking about coming after us."

For three more miles Tupurai-Tamaiti led Banks and Green at a rapid pace. Once they met three Tahitians on their way down to the sea with young plantains from the hills. Banks insisted on stopping and asking them whether they had seen the thieves. Tupurai shrugged and grinned when the three men pointed innocently in three different directions. They went on silently, the two Englishmen breathing hard.

"Ho, we're on to something," Banks said suddenly. Through the trees ahead he could see a crowd of men and women. "They're almighty excited. Could be they're happy over a bit of iron—newly acquired."

"Stop here," Tupurai-Tamaiti said. "I go no farther." He pointed toward the people ahead and made a quadrant shape with his hands.

Banks walked on alone. The Tahitians fell silent, the women drifting back through the crowd, the younger men moving forward. A few were smiling as Banks approached, but when he stepped past the first of them his way was barred. Slowly, in silence, he drew his pistols. "They are very small pistols," he



said to himself, "weapons fit enough for a lady's handbag." He stepped forward again.

Back and forth across the mouth of Matavai Bay, Reading and his crew sailed the longboat. No canoes had made for sea.

"All this blasted fume and fuss over a blinkin' machine for watchin' a star!" Reading spat to leeward.

"Planet," someone said. "That's what we're here for."

"Well, star or planet, the thieves'll not get the quadrant out of the bay. They'll make no coney out of Reading."

"If ye're speakin' of canoes, there comes one now."

"Bring her around," Reading roared. "We'll head 'em off before they know we're on to 'em."

"Mind ye remember the captain's words," the helmsman said as he heaved on the tiller. "No roughin' 'em."

"Gentle as a young ewe, that's me!" Reading's laugh boomed over the still water.

They closed swiftly at a wide angle to the canoe's course. Running a light breeze on the beam, they came within hailing distance.

"Heave to, brown hides," Reading shouted. "Head for the beach." The Tahitians smiled and waved.

"Get out those sweeps, ye louts," Reading ordered. "Sail's not enough."

"Easy does it, bos'n," the helmsman said. "We've plenty of way on, and the captain wants no trouble. Ye'll scare 'em into fight with your tongue."

"They'll get more than my tongue," Reading answered.

As the longboat came close aboard the canoe, Reading reached for his musket. His roar turned the eyes of the Tahitians

toward the barrel of the weapon. They knew it could kill. With one sudden motion they leaped from the canoe. As they plunged beneath the water a feathered cloak spread wide and floated lightly on the swell.

"Ye've done it now, ye blithering loud mouth," the helmsman shouted at Reading. "That was the big chief himself—Tutaha, the very one the captain wanted left alone." Without waiting for an answer, the helmsman took command. "Pick up the ones ye can. 'Tis a long swim to shore."

Four of the Tahitians had disappeared beneath the water. Their heads reappeared a full sixty feet away. They ducked under again and were gone toward shore. The fifth, Tutaha, quietly treaded water. In a moment he was seated silently in the longboat, his body gleaming, his face expressionless.

An hour past noon Cook gave up his search of the woods near the fort and set out after Banks, the midshipman showing the way. Behind him a small army of sailors and marines crashed through the brush. The trails were deserted.

Cook lead a long, hot march without pause. Banks had Green with him, and Tupurai-Tamaiti was wise and friendly. Still, Cook had seen enough to know that Tahitians would fight, given reason. Banks had no arms other than two small pistols—two shots only.

Banks swung the pistols slowly back and forth as he moved forward. A path opened through the crowd. He felt it close behind him as he walked ahead to the center of the group. There, on the ground, was a broken packing case. He could make out the painted name of a London manufacturer on its splintered boards. With his foot he began to move them aside, hoping to

find the quadrant. Again he felt the circle move closer behind him. Straightening slowly, he turned. The Tahitians, facing his guns, halted. Behind him others closed in. Two shots, he thought. Who's to be first?

A deep voice broke the silence. "Tapu," it said. "Tapu." The huge form of Tupurai-Tamaiti strode calmly through the crowd. In his hand he held the quadrant. Holding it high, he talked in Tahitian. Banks listened and understood.

The haole—the white man—Taupurai was saying, had saved him from death. Now he, ari'i of Matavai, would repay. The iron was of great value to Tapene Tute and had been taken from him in the night. Tupurai-Tamaiti had made it tapu, sacred to himself, the chief. No man without the blood of the ari'i would touch it. His people would understand.

He beckoned to Banks and walked to the edge of the crowd. Turning again, he said in his own language, "Before the sun sets, Tupurai-Tamaiti will kill a pig and feast with you who have lost good iron."

Cook heard them before he saw them. Around a turn in the trail came Banks, loudly thanking the stars, his luck, and the cut plug of tobacco that had made Tupurai-Tamaiti his friend. Cook smiled. He knew both his men and the quadrant were safe. They rested while he heard the story.

"Can't imagine," said Banks, "how that great hulk of a man spied around behind them while they were occupied with me and found the quadrant before any were the wiser. Once he had his hands on it and boomed out that it was tapu, they made no trouble. Even appeared a bit friendly before we left." Banks shook his head in wonder.

"We'll send them a steel ax and some nails while Tupurai

makes his peace with them in feast," Cook said. "We'll go back now and calm those at the fort. Our guns frightened them off."

The area around the fort, however, was far from deserted when Cook and Banks returned. In the woods at the edge of the clearing, groups of Tahitians stood watching the gates.

"What now?" Banks muttered. "Never seen 'em so still."

"Still," Cook said, "but weeping." He led the way through the last of the trees and watched the Tahitians move back. The enclosure was almost empty. Marines paced near the walls, their boots stirring dust. One Tahitian remained inside the fort. Owha'a stood outside the main tent, his face cast with sadness.

"Owha'a," Cook said, "why do your people weep?"

"They fear for the life of their ari'i-rahi," Owha'a answered. "They are sad that he is near death." He pointed toward the tent. "Tutaha," he said.

"What!" Banks cried. "Someone'll feel the lash for this." Cook was already inside, his anger silent but felt by those who waited in the tent.

Tutaha sat cross-legged on a tarpaulin. He looked up when Cook entered but said nothing. Reading stood near the chief.

The silence was broken when Reading suddenly began to explain. "I had no choice, Captain. The beggars jumped into the water. Couldn't leave 'em there. I—"

Cook whirled on him. "Get out of this tent and take the sentry with you. Report to Mr. Molyneaux and wait my orders." Cook leaned forward, a tall shadowy figure in the closed tent. "Tutaha, taio, come." He touched the chief lightly on the shoulder.

Tutaha looked up. "Ari'i-rahi," he said. "Tutaha will die ari'i-rahi."

"No," Cook said. "Taio. Tapene Tute ari'i haole taio Tutaha. Come, we will go to your people."

The chief rose and followed Cook. When the gates of the fort opened he grunted. Together the white chief and the brown moved from the enclosure. As they passed Banks, Cook said softly, "Follow us. Bring gifts."

Ahead through the trees they could see the Tahitians. Cook heard a low cry go up and saw them begin to move toward him. He stopped where the clearing ended and motioned Banks to come forward. Tahitians formed a silent audience among the trees. Then Cook made a speech. The Tahitian language came slowly, with many pauses.

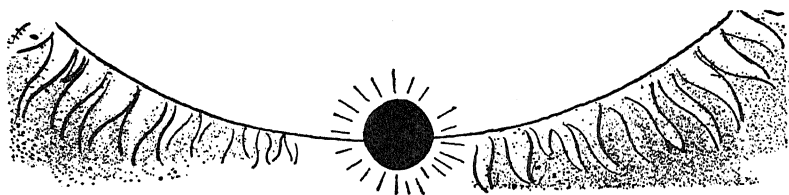
"Before the sun rose," he said, "an object tapu to the white chief was taken. Such a deed was wrong. I set out to punish the thief. It was as it should be. While I was gone, my people, thinking to help, took Tutaha to the fort that he might help me, his friend, to find the thief. Now it is past. The object that was tapu has been found. Tutaha is my friend."

Cook turned to Banks and took two steel-headed axes. "These are gifts for Tutaha," he said, "the great chief whose people are our friends."

There was a moment of quiet. Then Tutaha, the anger in his face giving way to relief and pleasure, took the axes and grunted, "Taio."

The Tahitians wept now with joy. As Tutaha walked solemnly away they crowded behind him and began to chant of good things that had been since their ancestors had come from the ancient birthplace of Kane.

Cook was sweating. For a moment he listened to the sounds from the forest. He wondered if Englishmen would forgive so quickly if their king had been locked in the closet of the French ambassador in London.



## *XVII. The Transit of Venus*

The third of June approached. On that day in 1769 Venus was to cross between the earth and the sun, and on that day in many parts of the world astronomers were to set their sights on the sun's rim and take the time of the transit. One of them was Cook, lieutenant in the Royal Navy, captain of the *Endeavour* at Matavai Bay, Tahiti. He pushed his preparations under peculiar difficulties.

With the London quadrant returned from its unexpected journey and again in place at the fort, Cook and Green practiced observations. Arrangements were made to set up Lieutenant Hicks, the master's mates Clerke and Pickersgill, and Midshipman Saunders on the eastern tip of the island, with the ship's ordinary quadrant. Then, in the event that clouds over Tahiti's mountains blanketed these two observation posts, plans were completed to send Gore, Banks, Monkhouse, and one of Banks's assistants to the small, neighboring island of Moorea.

Hicks and Gore had to be coached in the use of quadrants and chronometers in timing the meeting and parting of Venus and the sun. The three observation points had to be cleared and leveled, instruments adjusted, and the ship refitted and provisioned for departure immediately after the transit.

Cook was busy, but there were interruptions. Tutaha had not forgotten the insult of being held prisoner, in spite of the presents he had been given. Suddenly one day he ordered the Tahitians to cease trading with the English and demanded that Cook appear before him with gifts.

Cook was angry but he had no choice. His men and his ship needed both Tahitian friendship and food. So, with Banks, he set off in the pinnace around the curve of the island to Eparre, Tutaha's home. As the boat rode the long waves in toward the shore, Cook saw a large crowd of Tahitians gathering on the beach to meet them. When the boat grounded, Banks leaped to the sand and then hesitated. Cook stepped quickly forward. Without a word he pushed his way through the crowd, Banks following closely.

When he broke past the last rank of Tahitians, Cook saw a clearing set in the woods at the edge of the beach. There, sitting in state and obviously pleased with himself, was Tutaha. Hot from his trip in the open boat and angry at the distance he had come to serve the pride of a chief, Cook spoke with fewer words and shorter smiles than usual. He presented his gifts—another ax, a fine linen shirt, and a great red cloak.

With the presents around him, the customs of the land placed the burden now on Tutaha—a gift for a gift, a friend to a friend. Leaping from his seat, the stocky chief declared with much talk that a great entertainment would come before an even greater feast.

For two long hours the Englishmen sat cross-legged in the circle around the clearing while two giant Tahitians wrestled, danced, leaped, and jarred clouds of dust from the ground. At last, when Banks was muttering that his legs would never again support his weight and that, in fact, he doubted they would

ever straighten out at all; and when even Cook, for once, had exhausted his interest and was listening to his stomach growl for food, Tutaha ended the wrestling match with a short command and escorted Cook and Banks to a covered pit in the sandy earth. They watched, with hunger wetting their lips, while men cleared away broad, flat leaves and fire-blackened stones. Enveloped in clouds of fragrant steam were breadfruit cakes, coconut pastes, and wild fowl baked in leaves. In the center was a fat pig, roasted brown and glowing with juice.

"Oh, my starving soul!" groaned Banks. "There's a sight for kings. Enough for Henry the Eighth."

"Aye," said Cook, "'tis perhaps worth the endless waiting."

Cook and Banks never knew whether or not Tutaha sensed their impatience and decided to sate his pride rather than their appetites, or whether it was his final gesture to show Tahiti that he had forgiven Tapene Tute the insult of imprisonment. In any case, with Banks loudly and Cook silently groaning for the feast, Tutaha suddenly decided to eat in Matavai, on board the *Endeavour*.

Back to the pinnacle went Cook and Banks. The steaming pig, fowl, coconut cakes, and breadfruit were wrapped in leaves and loaded into canoes. On the four-mile row back to the ship Cook maintained perfect silence.

Banks stormed. "Madman! His heart's as cold as mountain rock. And that pig'll be too. There's no steam from it now, and its juices are sloshing in a canoe bottom. Dry and cold, the whole blasted feast!"

Dry and cold it was, and even drier and colder before they ate. Before sitting down Tutaha insisted on inspecting the ship, opening and closing drawers, lockers, and chests everywhere. Then the chief refused to eat with anyone. He was a sacred man



who could not eat food profaned by the presence of those less sacred than he.

Annoying as were his actions, Tutaha's return to Matavai worked wonders. Trade resumed. Provisioning of the ship progressed rapidly, and Tahitians helped prepare bases for the observations of the transit.

With the dawn on June 3, Cook's preparations were complete. At two sights on Tahiti and one on Moorea, quadrants were manned. The day was cloudless. When the sun broke above the horizon it was as though the atmosphere itself had disappeared with the night. Venus was visible as a point of light until the sky filled with full morning and the sun moved toward the planet. Then Venus faded in the brighter light, and Cook set his eye to the quadrant. Through the lens, shielded by smoke-darkened glass, the sun stood large and sharp, a clean-edged disk. As he waited he thought of the scientists in other corners of the earth—some, like himself, sent by the Royal Society; others were French, Russian, or Swedish, all set to watch and wait, as was he, for the passage of Venus directly between the sun and their lenses. Each would note a different time from the others, varying with the distances between them. Their measurements might add to man's small total of knowledge about his universe.

Cook knew the value of a fact as did few men of his time. He had gathered many himself and put them to use.

The sun, moving westward, had long since blotted out the light of Venus. Then, at fifty seconds after 9:21, Cook called out to Green to mark the time. At twenty seconds after 9:39 he called again, never taking his eye from the glass. At twenty seconds after 9:40 he called the mark for the third time and stepped back from the quadrant. It was over.

In his notebook Cook made the following entry:

*Transit of Venus, Sat. June 3d 1769*

Time by  
the Clock

H ' "

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9 21 50

—The first visible appearance of Venus on the sun's Limb. Very faint as in fig. 1.



— 39 20 —First internal contact on the outer limb of Venus seemed to coincide with that of the sun and appeared as in fig. 2.



— 40 20 —A small thread of light seen below the Penumbra, as in fig. 3.



*Evening*—The limb of Venus and the Penumbra was hardly to be distinguished from each other and the precise time that the Penumbra left the sun could not be observed to a great degree of certainty, at least not by me.

The Penumbra was visible during the whole transit and appear'd to be equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  part of Venus's diameter.

James Cook

There the information remained. The times and notes marked down by Cook were the unknown factors in a London equation. He was carrying them through unexplored seas around the far side of the world, while other observations were recorded and set down to wait in the pages of Royal Society records.

And so the transit of Venus was observed at Tahiti. Months of preparations, thousands of leagues of navigation, storms both heavenly and human, and long courses of time and events had led to an action that had lasted eighteen minutes and thirty seconds by the clock.

Cook at once pressed the fitting of the *Endeavour* for sea. Provisions were overhauled and restowed; those showing earliest decay were located where they would be the first to be used. Food and water were added from the island. New lines replaced old. Canvas was patched, boat seams recalced.

While work was in progress Cook took time to make a complete circuit of the island in a small boat, once more working at his old trade as surveyor and chartmaker. With his party he spent one night at Tutaha's village. There the chief showed his friendliness by entertaining them with dancing girls. They feasted hugely and slept peacefully while numerous articles of their clothing were stolen quietly from their hut. In the morning they watched while naked Tahitians played in the open sea surf. Swimming beside light canoes in heavy waves, the younger men and women of the village would wait until a wave reared back above them, on the point of breaking, and then fling the canoes over the crest, dive through the base of the sea, and emerge to seize the canoes again in the far trough. When they had made their way out beyond the surf, they would climb aboard their craft, turn toward the beach, paddle swiftly until they were caught up by an incoming wave, and ride down its slope with foam and spray at the bows. Just as it seemed to Cook that they would crash on the sand in the break of the surf, they would dig paddles deep, holding their canoes back while the wave rushed by beneath them to thunder on the beach.

On Eastern Tahiti, Cook found more fertile land than any he had seen near Matavai and a gay, energetic community of Tahitians whose canoes were seventy feet long and decorated by carvings from bow to high, pointed stern.

On the south coast he came across a squat pyramid of stones, forty-five feet high, built in steps. There he found relics,

bones, and bodies of chiefs kept sacred for all Tahitian time.

Back again at Matavai, Cook took time to settle more disputes. A rake was stolen; a cask was missed; a petty officer's sword vanished. The Tahitians had their own ideas about private property—very different ideas from those of the English. To them there was no such thing as the ownership of a rake, a cask, a sword, anything among the living, unless a chief placed the mysterious tapu on an object and made it sacred.

In spite of these troubles Cook finally saw that the work of making ready for sea was going well enough to plan a sailing date. He announced to his men that the fourteenth of July would find them moving out of Matavai Bay. The news went around from mouth to mouth among the Tahitians and an exchange of farewell presents took place. Then, on Sunday, July 9, Cook ordered the removal of all supplies and men from shore to ship. All was to be ready for departure in four days.

That night, in the mid-watch, two marines decided life among the Tahitians was finer than salt spray and salt meat on the *Endeavour*. They crept from the camp and disappeared into the forest, with Tahitians guiding them toward the mountains. A party sent to find them was surrounded and disarmed by the islanders with much laughter and great strength.

Cook wasted no time. He sent for the chiefs—Tutaha, Porea, and Tupurai-Tamaiti. "In four days we depart from Tahiti," he told them. "You are our friends and have received us well, but now we must go. We will take with us all who came with us. Two of my men are hiding in the mountains. Your people are helping them. You will understand that I must hold you here on the ship until my men are returned. No harm will come to you if none comes to them. It is because you have power over your people that I hold you."

At once there was an uproar, but from the sounds and gestures Cook understood that the chiefs had become as anxious as he that the two marines return at once. Tutaha ordered two of his men to guide a search party under the command of Lieutenant Hicks. By dawn on the eleventh the *Endeavour's* complement was again filled, the marines returned—thinking perhaps more bitterly than wistfully, as the lashes fell on their backs, of their twenty-four hours as free Tahitians. The life of the Royal Navy at sea was once more their future.

By dawn on the thirteenth, however, the *Endeavour's* complement was increased by two. One of the Tahitians that Cook had seen most often during the three months spent on the island had been Tupia, an elderly man who had been Pura's first minister and high priest in the days of her greatest power. Now, with Tutaha challenging Pura's authority and with age creeping over him, Tupia came to Cook.

"My time of honor in Tahiti is in the ebb of its tide," he said. "That is as it should be. But I know by you and by your great canoe that is carried by many sails on many tall masts for many miles, and by your skin and your iron and colored cloths, and by your ways, that there is much for me to see. My life here has been. What remains will be with you. If I return I will tell my people about your island, and they will see through my eyes."

Cook needed no persuasion. It was winter south of the equator and he wanted to explore other warm islands nearby and give winter time to ease before heading southwest toward colder waters. Tupia was known as a navigator among his people. He was a man who knew the outer islands and the people on them. His knowledge would be useful.

Next morning all was ready. Tupia came on board with a

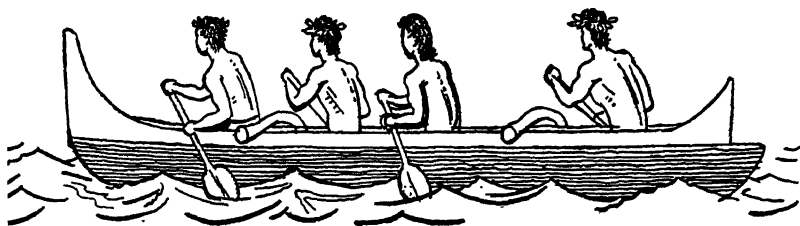


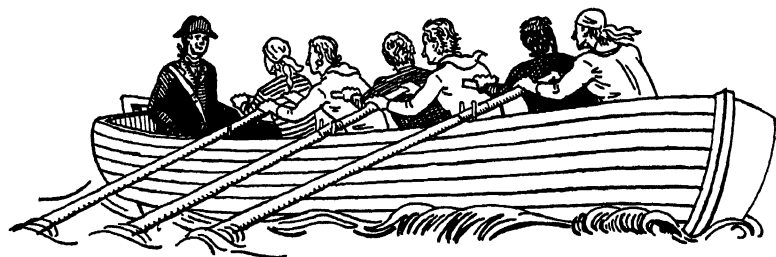
crowd of friends and a thirteen-year-old boy, Tai-ata, who was to come with him as servant. Matavai was filled once more with canoes, and the *Endeavour* all but swamped with farewell parties of Tahitian friends. There were last exchanges of presents—shirts for breadfruit, nails for bark cloth, iron for stone, knives for bows—and there was much weeping.

The anchor came up to the song of men at the capstan. The light air filled her sails, and the *Endeavour* slowly gathered way. Many Tahitians climbed down her sides and into canoes. Others remained on board until she was at Matavai's mouth, opposite deserted Fort Venus, and then, with shouts of parting, they dived into the water and struck out for shore.

Tupia tried hard. He was a man of rank. But the tears came at last when he and Tai-ata were the only Tahitians left on board the ship. Cook saw him climb the rigging to the topmast step. There he remained, looking aft, while Tahiti dropped below the horizon until only her mountaintops could be seen, purple against a curving line of low clouds.

Cook set the course—north, a few points west.





## *XVIII. Admiralty Orders*

There is a story among those told to white men by the Maoris of New Zealand that was first told long ago by an old Maori warrior.

“In the days long past,” it begins, “when I was a little boy, a vessel came to Whitianga, and when our old men saw the ship they said it was a tupua—some unknown thing—and the people on board were strange beings. The ship came to anchor, and the boats pulled on shore. As our old men looked at the manner in which they came on shore, the rowers pulling with their backs to the bows of the boat, the old people said, ‘Yes, it is so; these people are tupuas; their eyes are at the backs of their heads; they pull on shore with their backs to the land to which they are going.’ When these tupuas came on shore we, the women and children, ran away from them into the forest, and our warriors stayed alone with the tupuas. But when the tupuas did not do any harm to our warriors, we came back one by one, and gazed at them, and we stroked their garments with our hands, and we were pleased with the whiteness of their skins and the blue of the eyes of some of them.

“These tupuas began to gather oysters, and we gave some



kumara, fish, and fern-root to them. These they accepted, and we began to roast cockles for them; and as we saw that these tupuas were eating we were surprised and said, 'Perhaps these are not tupuas like the Maori tupuas.' "

"Now some of the tupuas had walking-sticks which they carried about with them, and when we arrived at the bare dead trees where the shags roost at night and have their nests, the tupuas lifted the walking-sticks up and pointed them at the birds, and in a short time thunder was heard to crash and a flash of lightning was seen, and a shag fell from the trees; and we children were terrified and fled, and we rushed into the forest, and left the tupuas alone. They laughed and waved their hands to us, and in a short time the bravest of us went back to where the tupuas were, and handled the bird, and saw that it was dead. But what had killed it?"

Later the old Maori who had been a young boy when the first white men came to his part of the land said that he and his friends had gone on board the great ship of the newcomers. "There was one supreme man in that ship," the old man remembered. "We all knew he was the lord of the whole by his perfect gentlemanly and noble demeanor. He seldom spoke, but some of the tupuas spoke much. . . . He was a very good man, and came to us—the children—and patted our cheeks, and gently touched our heads. His language was a hissing sound and words he spoke were not understood by us in the least.

"We had not been long on board the ship before this lord of the tupuas made a speech and took some charcoal and made marks on the deck of the ship, and pointed to the shore and looked at our warriors. One of our aged men said to our people, 'He is asking for an outline of this land.' And that old man stood up, took the charcoal, and marked the outline of the Ika-a-Maui.

And the old chief spoke to that chief tupua and explained that chart he had drawn."

That was the way an old Maori man remembered the coming of Captain Cook to New Zealand, far beyond Tahiti in the Southwest Pacific.

Following his orders, Cook had sailed from the islands near Tahiti south to the fortieth parallel of latitude, then due west in search of the southern continent that had been seen only in the logical dreams of Mr. Dalrymple of the Royal Society in London.

As time passed and cold, stormy weather gave way to a month of fair, they sailed endlessly on an unbroken ocean. The long, hollow swell from the south and the absence of currents were signs that Cook had read. To him they meant no continent was near. To Banks, the dream of a great undiscovered land was a dream of romance. He could not give it up, no matter what eyes and experience said to a seaman like Cook. For Cook was a man who never followed a dream.

On October 7, more than four months after the transit of Venus at Tahiti, they sighted land. In both the northwest and southwest it stretched as far as the man in the foretop could see. They landed there, standing for the first time on a shore no white man had known before.

The Maoris, big, well knit, almost naked, met them with twelve-foot spears, spiked clubs, and sharp stone axes. Darker than the Tahitians and more warlike, they gave the *Endeavour* a wild reception and its crew many bad moments. But Tupia spoke to them in his own tongue and found that they understood him. He talked long and hard, with many South Sea gestures, until at last the Maoris became friendly and helped reprovision the ship.

This new land seemed green, rich, and endless to the English. Banks was sure they had found the great continent at last. Cook said no; from the wind, the sea, and the motion of tides he was sure. Banks argued, saying it was perhaps the northern edge of a vast continent running far south toward the pole, into seas no man had explored. Cook said only, "You shall have an opportunity to see for yourself."

South, then, they sailed, along the eastern shore, and the land swung back to the east. Banks and those who thought with him began to smile secretly among themselves, but suddenly the coastline retreated west again. There were no harbors and the land became more and more barren, until Cook turned north, sailed hard by the shore off his larboard side, and late in December 1769 brought the *Endeavour* around the most northern point of the land and into the western seas.

Off the northern tip of the island on Christmas Day Cook saw three rocky islands. By their shape and by the shoreline and by the sun and stars his quadrant watched he knew them to be the Three Kings, named by the Dutch explorer, Tasman, a hundred and twenty-six years before. The land he had found, Cook knew then, was the unknown east coast of New Zealand.

The west coast curved south again and led them around the great north island of New Zealand, along the shore once seen by Tasman, through the straits now bearing Cook's name, and out again to the east. South of them, across the straits, stretched more land. Again Banks's dream was revived. True, the northern section had been proved an island. But perhaps the southern was a peninsula projecting from a great continent to the south. They sailed south again, along the eastern shore of this new land, until March 10, 1770, when Banks wrote in his journal, "Blew fresh all day; we were carried round the point,

to the total destruction of our aerial fabric called continent." It was the southern island of New Zealand, larger than the north island, and they had circumnavigated it.

Captain Cook had done what he had been sent to do and more. He had observed the transit of Venus at Tahiti. He had discovered and charted the islands in Tahiti's group. He had sailed south and west through an unknown sea in search of an unknown continent. He had destroyed the dream of that continent's being in the warm regions of the South Pacific. If it existed at all, the world would know from his search that it lay below the invisible band of climate where winds blow hard and cold and ice comes north from the southern pole. He had discovered and charted the western shore of the great islands of New Zealand.

Now his orders, the worn rigging on his ship's spars, the patches on her canvas, the weary year and a half his men had spent away from civilized life as they knew it—all these things demanded his return to England.

Cook called his officers to his cabin one night in March of 1770. The *Endeavour* lay at anchor at d'Urville Island in Tasman Bay, inside the western coast of New Zealand. On the table that hung from his cabin bulkhead lay his chart of the Pacific. Around him sat Hicks, Gore, Molynéaux, and Monkhouse for the ship; and Banks and Solander for the Royal Society. Pointing to the chart, Cook said, "As you know well, we have joined waters that have been sailed before. From Tahiti to this eastern coast of New Zealand we have sailed in search of a new continent. We have not found it." Cook glanced at Banks. "A fact as valuable within the terms of our orders as though we had come upon a whole new world."

Banks looked up and raised his eyebrows, but Cook went on.

"There are among you those who still hold fast to thoughts of a continent south of any waters we have sailed. It may be that it is there, below our track." He pointed to the fortieth parallel on the chart.

"The choice before us is clear," he continued. "We can sail south of forty to look farther for the continent. You know the weather to be expected there. You know the condition of ship and stores. Or we can return to England." He paused. He knew there was but one choice. His officers debated not at all.

Hicks spoke first. "We know the ship and her condition, aye. 'Tis not bad. The captain has brought us a long voyage from home and a long time without damage. But wind, sun, and work have worn her thin and a bit ragged in the trim. She'll not take such weather as she's like to find south of forty. For myself, I say 'tis home, and no choice to it."

Monkhouse spoke next. "I'm no finished seaman, though I know a deal more than when I shipped out, so I'll not put my voice to the question of whether or not the ship is fit for southern winds. But about the men I do know well. This crew is healthy, more healthy than we'd a right to hope for. There's no doubt 'tis a wonderful thing to explore new seas and discover new lands and fill the charts of the world with lines, fixes, and harbors. But I'm here to speak of a thing greater to my mind. No ship manned by any crew or captained by any man has stayed at sea so long, nor as far from home supply, and not lost half its crew to scurvy, either dead or down, unable to work their share. There's more to opening the world than sailing new lines on a chart. Men must be able to live and know what they have found and to come back to sail again farther than before. 'Tis no miracle we've discovered that brings ourselves and our men so far and so well. 'Tis the captain."

There was silence. Cook's eyes followed a line on the chart.

At last Monkhouse coughed and went on. "There are things other than the health of the bodies on board. A year and a half is a length of time away from familiar people and places. If there is naught else to think on, the mind and spirits need care. Thoughts of home ahead would keep the hearts of the men where they'd best be—not, of course, to mention my own heart and my own thoughts of things like mutton in a warm kitchen."

They all agreed, except Banks, who was silent.

"Then 'tis done," said Cook. "We'll go home by the course that's east from England, west from here. Ahead then lies New Holland. It was circumnavigated by Tasman a century and a quarter ago, but his chart shows little in the east. He stayed well clear after finding a great offshore reef. Since 'tis nearest to us on a course to Dutch ports in the Indies, we'll make for that unknown coast, find an opening in the reef, sail north along the shore, and keep supplied with water and what food we find on land until we reach a Dutch port. 'Tis the shortest distance to the western world, and"—Cook paused and looked around at his men as though to sense their feelings—"the east coast of New Holland needs examination. Since 'tis unknown, its charting will be of value."

At dawn, March 31, the *Endeavour* was underway, running hard with a southeast gale on her quarter.



## *XIX. Lonely Reef*

It was night. Banks sat alone in his cabin, thumbing his journal before making the day's entry. Gore and Monkhouse were on deck forward, listening to the leadsman's chant as he sounded. They could see him standing in the chains, working easily and rhythmically. He coiled his line, swung the free end forward, back, forward, and cast the lead in a long arc. It fell far ahead, breaking the water in a maze of moonlit spray, and plummeted for the bottom. Cook was aft near the helm.

"Eleven June, 1770," Banks wrote at the top of the page. More than two months since leaving New Zealand, and seven weeks since they had made landfall on the southern tip of the New Holland coast. They had been ashore several times and had seen the black-skinned, black-haired people native to Australia—so different in skills, language, appearance, and emotions from Tupia of Tahiti.

At first it had been a flat, dry, sandy land with scattered eucalyptus trees, bright-colored birds, occasional huts, and wide, empty shores. What little fresh water there was lay deep beneath the sand. As they had sailed on north the land rose and became rough. They had cruised close to shore with no sight or sounding of Tasman's great reef until late in May.

Banks had made his entries carefully but had found few things of importance to say. He had noted the tracks of a large animal, one that sometimes left long spaces between its marks, as though it had jumped incredible distances, but neither he nor any of the others had seen the animal itself. Tracks alone made an unsatisfactory entry for his journal.

Then they had come upon the reef. That had been worth noting. Running north and south along the coast, varying from fifty to one hundred miles offshore, was a rough coral shelf, a vast barrier between land and open sea. Crag and peak showed above the water, some always breaking the Pacific into surf and sprouting green here and there where coral had been worn to sand. Others showed only when the tide had ebbed, and some showed not at all, unless a ship were so close at hand a man in the rigging could look almost straight down through the clear water and see the sharp edges and murderous knobs.

Banks described it carefully. As he wrote, his lamp hung almost motionless in its gimbals, though the slap of water against the hull told him the *Endeavour* was moving nicely in the calm behind the reef.

Gore and Monkhouse, looking ahead into the moon-brightened night, heard the same slap of water under the bows. "I'll take every day like this night," Monkhouse said. "Calm, bright, and a good breeze carrying us toward England. That reef



keeps the sea down like oil. For myself and for all those below, who for once are sleeping without banging from side to side, their teeth rattling to the motion of the waves, I'd as soon sail all the way to the chalk cliffs behind this reef."

"Fourteen fathoms," sang the leadsman.

"Aye," Gore answered, "'tis fine on the sight of it. Calm, as ye say, a great moon to light all in our path above water, and a fine breeze of wind for standing offshore. But 'tis what neither sun nor moon can light for us and what the fine breeze of wind may be driving us on that keeps us jumping like blasted monkeys on a line. Here—'tis late night in fine weather, but there's an extra crew always standing by the anchors, a man always in the chains, swinging the lead; and a double watch at the masthead. Even the captain sleeps but little. He goes himself into the rigging, looking for coral heads and shelves the leadsman can't sound until too late. Aye, for myself I'll take open ocean with no bottom—from here to England."

"Twenty-one fathoms, five." The leadsman's call carried aft to Cook.

Cook turned to Molyneaux at his elbow. "She's deepening. We'll hold on with the breeze until we've more than to spare under the keel, then bring her north."

"Twelve fathoms," the leadsman called loudly.

"Mr. Molyneaux! Let go clews and let her run." Cook snapped out his orders and waited for soundings.

"Ten fathoms," came the cry. "Eight fathoms."

"Stand by to put about and come to anchor," Cook ordered.

"Braces!" Molyneaux roared.

Down the dark deck men moved to their stations.

"Eighteen fathoms."

Molyneaux relaxed. Cook waited.

"Twenty."

"Stand on," Cook said to Molyneaux.

"Aye, aye. Likely we've passed over a ledge and are in the pool beyond. She'll ride clear away."

"Hold your men to their stations," Cook said.

For almost an hour they sailed serenely through the moonlight. The leadsman's voice sank again to the monotony of deep water.

A few minutes before eleven the lead reached bottom at seventeen fathoms.

"Ease her," Cook ordered. "Look lively to your stations and stand by to put about at the next cast."

The leadsman coiled his line swiftly and swung the lead back. Suddenly it was snatched from his hand. He was pitched to his knees, hard against the chains. With a grind and a roar the *Endeavour* struck, rose in the bow, and came down hard. Empty water casks broke their lashings and thundered across the forecastle. Lines snapped and writhed down through the rigging. Men were thrown to the deck.

In his cabin Banks went down. His chair overturned, his journal smeared where his pen dragged across an empty page, his inkwell spilled.

Gore and Monkhouse were sprawled face to the deck. They could feel the ship grind forward on the coral. Deep below them timbers ripped and water hissed in the bilges.

"Mr. Molyneaux," Cook roared, "clew up. Strike yards and topmasts."

On the cluttered deck men rose to their feet and ran silently. With her sails furled and no longer straining, the *Endeavour* eased her pounding and came more solidly to rest on the great barrier reef.

Although he did not speak of it, Cook knew how desperate was their situation. To himself he summed it up quickly. They were not far from the coast of New Holland. The boats could not hold all the men, but there might be time to ferry back and forth before the ship went down, if such was her condition. The shore itself was no easy haven. It was almost desert. More than four hundred leagues lay between them and the Dutch port at Batavia. No one could lend them aid. They would not be missed for perhaps a year, and then the only chart that could lead rescuers to them lay on his own table below. They were alone in their world.

On the other hand, the weather was with them, fair and calm. Without that they were lost.

For once Cook set aside his habit of thinking slowly and carefully—almost as though he thought aloud in words—through each step of a problem. He compassed it in one thought and made his decision. Float her. If she was badly gutted, drag her off the reef and run her hard for the mainland beach. Then save her timbers, build a smaller ship out of them, and reach Batavia.

If she could be saved, find a bay and careen her, patch her, and sail the *Endeavour* herself into Batavia and on to England.

"Mr. Hicks," he called, "hoist out the boats and sound round the ship. She's firm as she is for the time. Mr. Gore, take charge on deck. Clear topsides gear and make way for lightening ship. Mr. Molyneux, see to her below. Sound bilges and start your pumps."

After working around the ship with line and lead, Hicks reported that she was on the edge of a coral bank that stretched northwest from her bow. South and west lay deeper water. Molyneux sent word that bilge soundings showed little rise in

level but that he could not get at the point of the leak because of stores and ballast below.

"Mr. Hicks," Cook ordered, "carry out the stream anchor to the south with two hawsers and heave taut."

While the boats were out with the anchor, all hands cleared ship. Hoop staves, empty casks, and oil jars went over the side. With the ship still grinding forward inch by inch and striking hard on the coral, Cook called the boats away again, this time to carry the coasting anchor out to the southwest. There it was bedded firm, while the capstan was run around, taking up slack and heaving taut. Still the *Endeavour* moved forward with each swell. The spare stream anchor went out and a third cable was strained aft to hold her.

Although the night was cool and dry, men sweated at capstan, windlass, and pumps. Thirty tons of water were started. Boatswain's and carpenter's condemned stores were carried from below and jettisoned. Deep in the hold, stone and iron ballast was passed from hand to hand, rising a level with each pair of men until it reached the weather deck, where the last men in line rolled it over the rail. Even firewood joined the jetsam floating downwind.

By morning the *Endeavour* was light on the reef but making water fast. In the early sunlight she was a motionless hulk heading a long trail of moving debris. The best bower anchor was carried out at dawn. Four cables now strained aft.

All hands worked. Each man knew the ship must be saved to save himself, knew that the boats could not hold them all. And each knew that if she floated free the coral that cut her bottom would cease to plug her holes. If her wounds were bad, she might go down like lead.

Three pumps clanked and hissed and drove jerking streams

of water over the side. The fourth was clogged, useless. Six carriage guns plunged to the bottom. More strain was taken on the anchor cables. But by noon the tide had set the ship over on a three-strake heel to starboard. The weather spared her, holding light and fair, never making seas.

The small bower anchor was added to the four already out. By four in the afternoon the tide was low and the ship lay far over. Parts of the craggy bank showed dry above the surface. Cook knew they would stay there probably another six hours, until the tide was full high again. The pumps were holding the leak, and if the weather held fair she might float with the flood. If not, they would have to cut her down to a shell to await the following tide.

Night came and the moon rose again in a clear sky. By nine-thirty she righted.

"Double-man the capstans," Cook ordered. "Take full strain on the cables. Stretch them thin!"

Fighting for every inch of turn around the capstans, the men heaved until sweat ran from their chins and sea water sprayed from the vibrating anchor cables. Pound by pound the pressure increased. The only sounds over the moonlit water were the officers' low words and the occasional creak of gear aloft.

Near ten o'clock the first loud cry since she had run on the reef came from the deck. It was Monkhouse. "She budged! By God, she budged!"

"Aye, Captain," Gore's deep voice rose from normal, "we felt her give on the capstan."

"Then together—heave!" Cook's command carried down the deck like a long stroke lash.

With a shiver the ship moved again. Suddenly the capstans spun four times around, and the *Endeavour* floated free.

They veered her away on the stream anchor and small bower and carried the best bower and coasting anchor ahead in full fifteen fathoms. The small bower fouled bottom and had to be cut away, but the ship was free in the water and floating.

"Molyneaux," Cook called, "set your canvas. And send below to sound your bilges."

She was making water fast. The pumps rattled on, but the leak flowed faster than they could suck. Cook set her course straight for land. Below him on deck he could hear the rush and hurry of men working at fothering her hole. A square-sail was spread on deck near the bow, lines secured at its corners. Over it was poured oakum, pitch, oil—anything to make the cloth hold water. Then one pair of lines was carried forward, passed beneath the bow, and paid out slack. Over the side went the sail, held by the two lines at its topmost edges. When it had floated aft, above the hole, the lines under her bottom were taken in. The cloth slid beneath the water and against the side of the ship.

Those below heard it catch. With a deep, wet thud the canvas was sucked across the hole by the inrushing water. There it was held secure by all four corner lines, two beneath the keel to the far side deck and two straight up to the near rail.

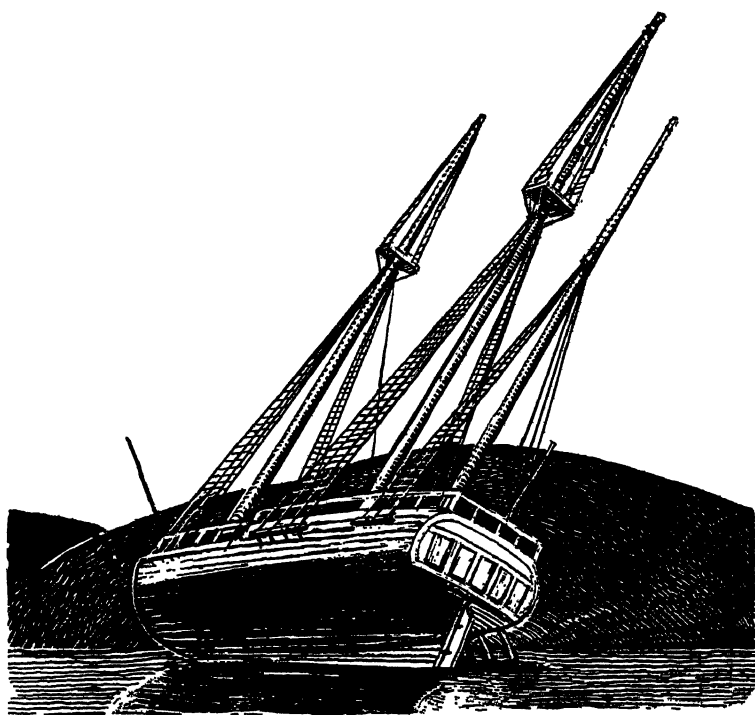
She was fothered—not dry but fothered, so the pumps could hold the water down in her bilges as long as the fothering lasted.

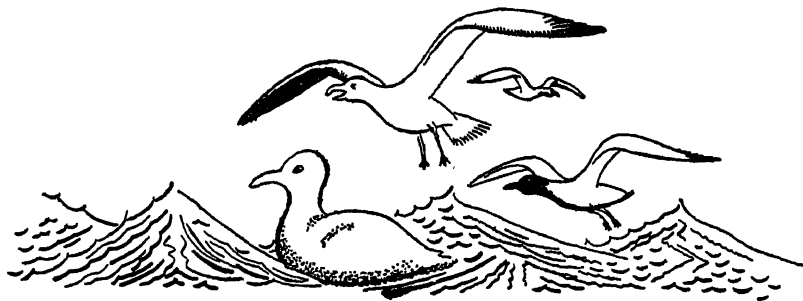
On June 14 Cook brought the *Endeavour* into a river on the mainland of Australia, striking bottom twice, and warped her along the beach. When they had moved all heavy gear, stores, and themselves ashore, they careened her and saw her damage. A great gash appeared above low water. Expanses of sheathing and timber were sheared off. The false keel was shredded.

And in the center of the battered area was a hole straight through her bottoms. Wedged hard where it served best as a plug was a huge coral head.

"'Tis the piece that did the damage," Molyneaux said.

"Aye," Cook answered, "and saved her from going down in deep water."





## *XX. Batavia*

More than two months after they careened her on the bank of the lonely river, the *Endeavour* was at sea again. At last, patched and calked, still making water below, she cleared the northern point of the Australian east coast.

No European had seen that coast before. In all, Cook had brought the *Endeavour* west across the Pacific until the new lines of land he had drawn on his blank chart as he sailed met those drawn long before by Dutch explorers sailing east to the Indies. With formal ceremony Cook had taken possession of the whole eastern shore of Australia for England. It was his contribution to Empire. Now his discoveries there were finished. The northern coast and the Indies beyond belonged to Holland.

Cook and his crew touched briefly on the shore of New Guinea, but their chief work was done, and home was ahead. The longing that had grown in their hearts and minds over the endless months at sea burst over them and could be felt and



heard like a sigh through the ship. With the jungles of New Guinea fading astern, Banks wrote of it in his journal:

As soon as ever the boat was hoisted in we made sail and steered away from this land, to the no small satisfaction of, I believe, three-fourths of our company. The sick became well and the melancholy looked gay. The greater part of them were now pretty far gone with the longing for home which physicians have gone so far as to esteem a disease, under the name of nostalgia. Indeed I can find hardly anybody in the ship clear of its effects but the captain, Dr. Solander, and myself, and we have constant employment for our minds, which I believe to be the best if not the only remedy for it.

On October 10, 1770, Cook brought the *Endeavour* to mooring in the Dutch port of Batavia on the coast of Java, still half the girth of the world away from England. Her anchors splashed; her cables rattled, payed out, and came taut. Slowly she swung her head to the tide and rode to rest. Her crew crowded the rails and talked excitedly, pointing to the large buildings on the swampy land near the shore, to the scattered frame houses on the hills behind, and to the shipyards, taverns, white people, stores, and streets. They had seen nothing like this since leaving Rio de Janeiro, nearly two years before. Behind them lay all the Pacific. Ahead lay the Indian Ocean, Africa's Cape, and the lanes north through the Atlantic to England.

Soon after anchoring those at the rail saw a boat putting out from shore. When it came near, a deep voice boomed from the *Endeavour*, carrying above the babble. "Ahoy, the boat! What news from England?"

The Hollanders in the boat waved and smiled but did not answer. When they had drawn alongside and had come aboard they reported directly to Cook's cabin. There the terms and rules of the *Endeavour's* stay in Batavia were explained.

Cook arranged to purchase supplies, to put Banks and his party ashore to live on land a while, and to careen and repair the ship in one of the fine Dutch yards.

The news from England was meager; the Hollanders of Batavia heard little enough from their own distant home and still less from England. But what there was stirred talk on board. There was trouble at home. Mobs were roaming London streets, it was said, crying the understandable "Down with King George" and the meaningless "Up with King Wilkes!" What was more, Englishmen in the New World of America were acting strangely unlike Englishmen, it seemed. They were rioting against the king's men, refusing to pay taxes, and calling themselves "Americans."

Hints and scraps like these made up the news from home. The rest was loud guesswork in the cabins and between decks of the *Endeavour*. Cook heard it out, then went about his work.

For nine days all went well in Batavia. The men went ashore, ate fresh food, drank too much, and roamed the streets in small but noisy groups. Cook gathered all the diaries and journals together and sent them off on a Dutch ship for England. With them he sent a letter to the Admiralty, describing the voyage, the discoveries of the islands near Tahiti, the circumnavigation of New Zealand, the charting of Australia's east coast, and the proof that Mr. Dalrymple's continent did not exist in the southwest seas—unless it was very far south indeed. At the end of his letter, Cook wrote:

In justice to the officers and the whole crew, I must say they have gone through the fatigues and dangers of the whole voyage with that cheerfulness and alertness that will always do Honour to British seamen, and I have the satisfaction to say that I have not lost one man by sickness during the whole voyage.

A few mornings later Monkhouse went on deck, ready for a trip ashore to purchase medical supplies. Waiting for the boat to be hauled in from its mooring boom, he felt someone come up beside him and lean heavily against the rail. Turning, he saw it was Tupia. Monkhouse looked closely at the old Tahitian. "You've a sad look to your eye," he said.

"A long sadness is on me," the old man answered.

"Aye, we're all a long way from our homes," Monkhouse said, "but we'll be sailing toward ours and away from yours. There's a great difference there for the spirits. Is it the people of home you are thinking of?"

"Before last night," Tupia answered, "I saw in my dreams pig roasting in a pit at Matavai, with breadfruit and plantains. Now my stomach is gone from me. Today I think of the breezes blowing in across the great, clean sea toward Tahiti, and I try to breathe the hot, wet air of this strange place. It is hard for me. I think of my people, but then today it is hard to think even of them. I am hot inside."

Monkhouse placed his palm against the old Tahitian's brow. His hand came away warm and dry.

"You're taken with fever, Tupia," he said. "We'd best get you below."

The old man nodded and slowly walked across the deck with Monkhouse. "Send my boy, Tai-ata, to me," he asked as he climbed down the companionway.

Tupia was the first to come down with the Indies fever. Weakened by age, by melancholy, by distance from his island home, and by the change in air and food, he was an easy victim. Cook and Monkhouse carried him ashore, up to the clearer breezes in the hills behind Batavia. There he lay for long days and nights, eating only what was forced upon him.

One day, when his fever seemed to ease, he called again for Tai-ata. The boy came and sat wearily on the floor beside Tupia's cot. They spoke together in Tahitian.

"You have been more than one who serves me," Tupia said. "Now that the heat leaves me I am weak, but I see clearly again. I see our return to Tahiti together. You shall return as my son."

Tai-ata looked at the old man with tears in his eyes. "I am glad the heat is leaving you," he said. "I am glad I have taken it from you."

Tupia turned on his side and looked closely at the boy. Then he called out for Monkhouse. The surgeon examined Tai-ata. The fever had struck again.

Within a few days the boy was dead. Tupia, who had been recovering, cried out when he heard the news and, from that moment on, grew steadily worse. To Monkhouse he said, "I am old. My home is far. I have seen great wonders. My life is done. I go now to the great land, to the hill of Rai-atea, to the Hawaiki of my fathers and of their gods."

Cook performed the services for the two Tahitians, the old man and the boy, and watched them buried in the hills behind Batavia. When it was over he went at once to the shipyard and hastened the work on the *Endeavour*. But he could not save the time already lost to the fever. He had sailed his crew for two years in the farthest seas men knew, and none had died of scurvy. No ship had escaped before; it was a miracle in his time. But now time ran low.

Before the ship could be made fit for sea Monkhouse was dead—the surgeon himself, always full of spirit, friend to all on board, a light for the dark in mind, dead after a few days of raging fever. Banks and Solander fell ill but improved when at last the *Endeavour* left Batavia and sailed west.

She had sailed in and out of seas and island bays that were barren, provident, lonely, wild, or empty, and she had remained a healthy ship. Now she sailed at last from a port of European people, headed for home, and all save two on board were sick or dead. The two were an old sailmaker who claimed drink as his protection and Cook himself.

Many were dying. At one time twelve sick men, too weak to haul the load of six healthy men, were all that Cook had to work his ship. In the two-and-a-half-month voyage from Batavia to Table Bay at Capetown on the southern tip of Africa, twenty-seven men died of the fever. Among them were Green, two of Banks's naturalists, and four of the eight marines.

Only Cook himself was really well, and what he felt in his mind as he watched his men die can only be imagined. His journals are quiet on the subject, noting only deaths, winds, and courses sailed to Table Bay. There twenty-eight men were carried ashore and nursed until they recovered or they too died.

After a month in Table Bay the *Endeavour* left her mooring and slipped out into the Atlantic, bound on the last long leg to England. As she passed the harbor entrance Molyneaux, lying in his cabin where he had been for many weeks, quietly closed his eyes and died. A few days later Hicks followed the sailing master. Both were buried at sea by the sad, numb men with whom they had sailed around all the world except the small patch of sea that still lay between them and home.

Pickersgill became the new sailing master and Gore took Hicks' place as first lieutenant. Midshipman Clerke was promoted from the ranks to become junior lieutenant. Reduced and reshuffled, they sailed on north, a quiet ship. They struck rough weather and watched their rigging and sails give way, patch by patch and line by line, to be replaced or repaired

again. Cook sailed her as carefully and calmly as ever, speaking little.

Not until they passed a Liverpool brig did spirits begin to rise again. Cook spoke the brig and heard that wagers were being made in London that the *Endeavour* was lost, sunk in some wild sea, no man of her complement to be seen again. He passed the brig's news among his men and saw them smile a little. For the first time since leaving Batavia they seemed to realize they were on their way home.

Cook thought of home himself. Standing at the quarterdeck rail he looked past the bow, his mind on Bess and his children. Then he looked again at his men on deck. At the capstan some of them were hauling a brace against the wind. He was suddenly sad as he watched them. Then he heard them start to sing. Up and down the deck others took it up. They hadn't sung since before the Indies fever.

“Then hoist every sail to the breeze,  
Come, shipmates, and join in the song;  
Let's drink while the ship cuts the seas,  
To the gale that may drive her along.

“Ye sailors, I'm bound to my love,  
Ye sailors, I'm bound to my love.  
I've done with the toils of the seas,  
Ye sailors, I'm bound to my love.”

On July 10, 1771, a sounding brought up bottom shells and stones. Cook passed the word. They were opposite the Scilly Isles.

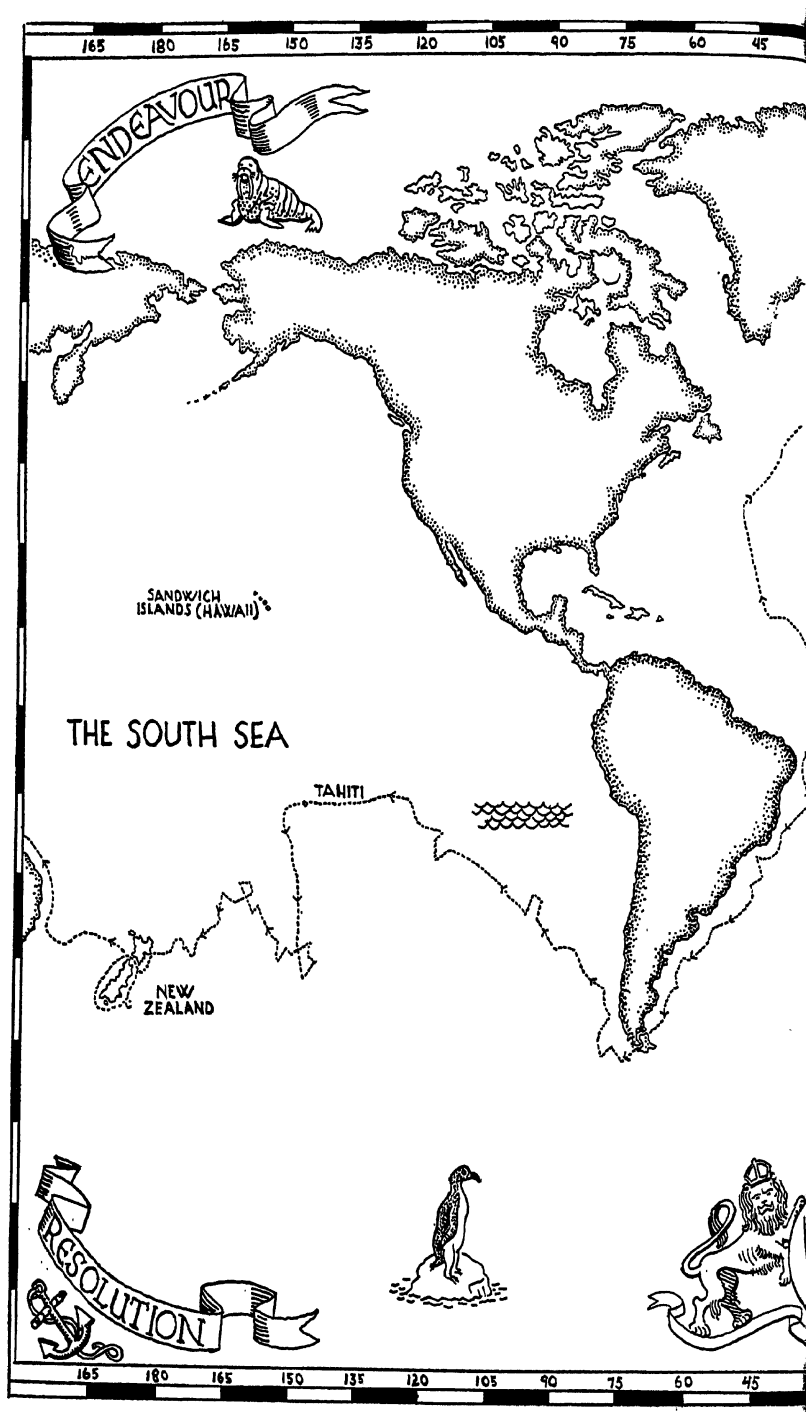
At noon the cry came from the masthead. “Land, ho!”

Land's End, the tip of England herself, slid by on the horizon

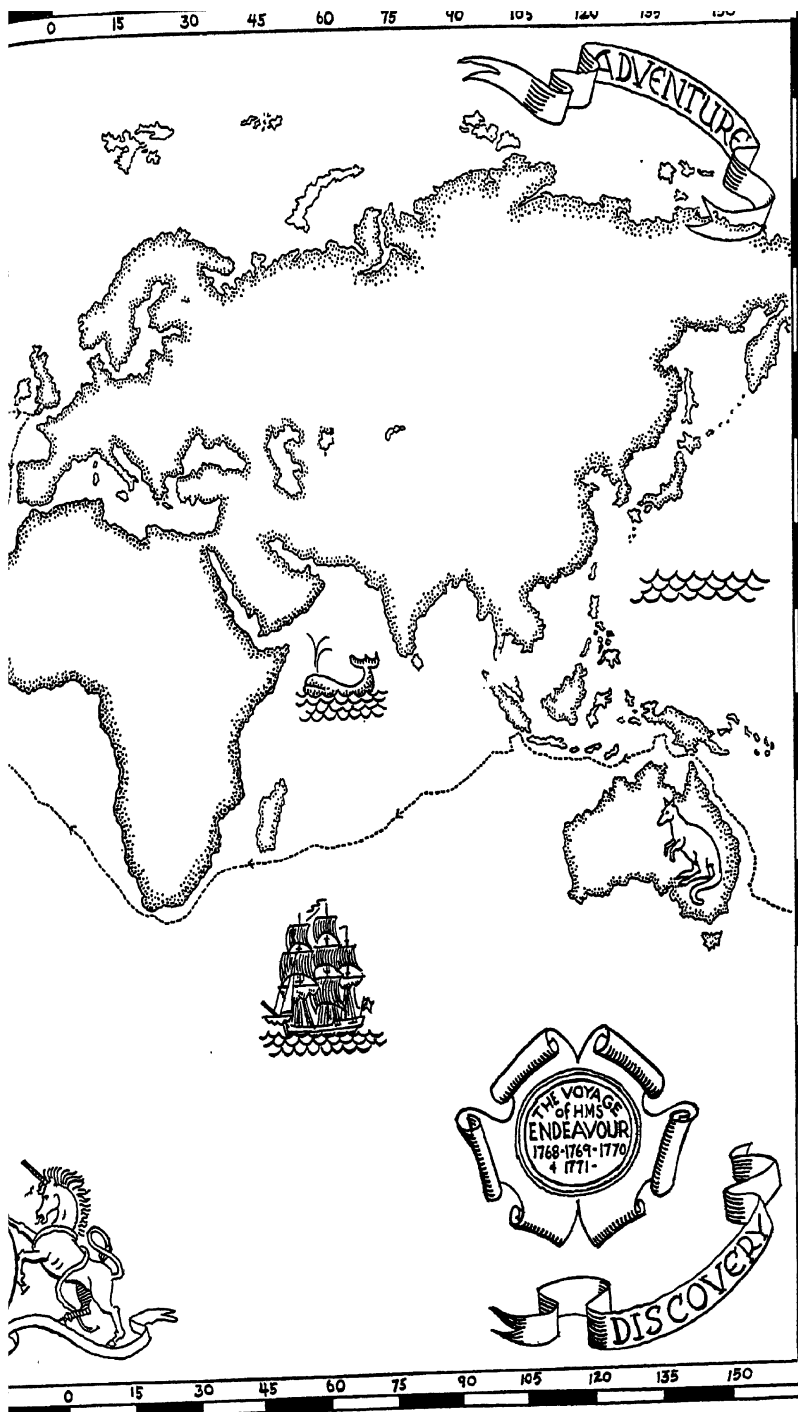
to port. They saw the Lizard and the Bill of Portland. They passed Peverell Point and Beachy Head. They sailed hard by Dungeness and the gleaming bluffs at Dover. Slowly they sailed up the coast of England.

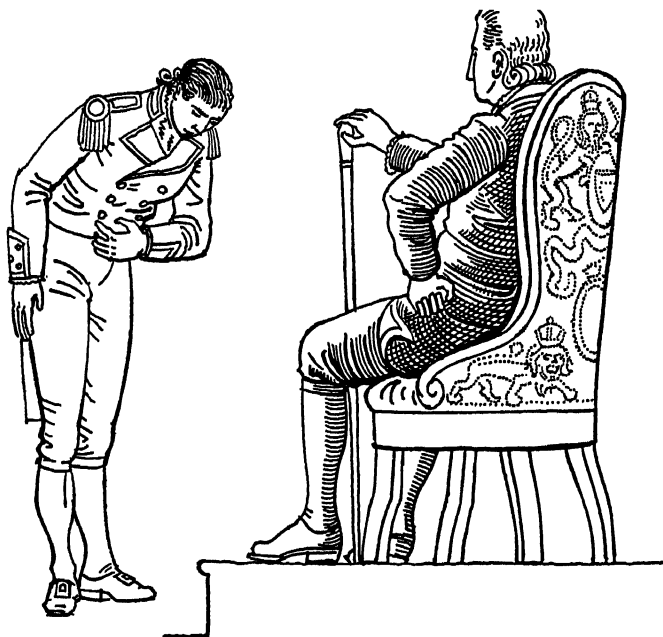
On July 13, at three in the afternoon, an old, battered, sea-worn Newcastle collier edged slowly into the Downs and dropped anchor. The *Endeavour* was home from the South Seas.











## XXI. *Commander Cook*

On the first day of August 1771 Cook saw to the paying off of his crew and watched while the men who had weathered three years at sea said awkward good-bys, then melted into London's crowds—and out of the pages of history. Only Clerke, Pickersgill, and Gore would sail with him again.

Of the others, Banks alone went on to win a remembered place in the world. He became a famous man of science, president of that same Royal Society that had sent him out with Cook, a parlor cat in social London, strangely leonine at his core. Of Solander, though he was brilliant in many ways, it is said that he never settled down to any one place of work. In all, of the ninety-four on board the *Endeavour* when she sailed from England, fifty-six returned.

It had been a quiet return. The newspapers of the day mentioned it in passing. News of her success had reached England before her, had been cheered, and then had given way to newer news. The wagers made that she and Cook and her crew were gone had been lost, paid, and forgotten. When Cook reported to the Admiralty he found that politics had changed the men behind the titles of Lords Commissioners. The new Lords welcomed him and praised him, but, after all, he had been sent out by others. He was presented to King George in brief show of gratitude, given the rank of commander and a ship to go with it—the Thames-moored ship *Scorpio*.

For a few months there was rest and almost calm. Cook lived at home and came to know his family again. His years at sea had been long years for Bess, but she had waited patiently. She was quiet now, and older. And this time their joy together was touched with sadness and made strange by the years apart. Their son James was eight, Nathaniel almost seven. Elizabeth, his daughter, had died three months before the *Endeavour* sailed into the Thames. And Joseph, a son he had never seen, had died a baby.

Cook worked at his journals, submitted reports to the Royal Society, and waited. As it turned out, the observations of the transit of Venus, Cook's own and those of others in scattered parts of the world, were interesting but not much more. They were put together, recorded, collated, compared, murmured over, figured at, and filed away. The sun remained an unknown distance away from the earth. The quadrants, clocks, and glasses used were too rough, not fine enough for the kind of accuracy needed when a tick of time or a spider-thread width in a lens added or subtracted fifty thousand miles of space to the answer.

One report Cook sent in raised a stir. He had explored longer and farther at sea than any Englishman before him, and he had come home from around the world with his crew free from the curse of sailors, scurvy. He wrote it up and explained how voyages should be made. And the Royal Navy believed him. Dating from Cook and the *Endeavour*, sailors lived longer and were stronger at sea, and far voyages held less terror and were surer of success.

Moreover, Cook reported on the routes, the charts, the seasons of the South Seas. It was knowledge not complete still, but carried well forward by him. What is more, it started the fever again among merchants, scientists, and adventurers. A new voyage was planned, to confirm or set at rest forever Mr. Dalrymple's dream. There was one place left to look in the South Seas, the waters south of Cook's first track across the world. Many men were discussed as leaders for the expedition. There were arguments loud and almost unending, but in the end it was Cook who went.

Again he took Whitby-built ships—two this time. After the Admiralty had seen to the scrubbing of the coal from their holds, they were named the *Resolution* and the *Adventure*. And again it was John Walker of Whitby who helped Cook select them.

Beginning in July of 1772 and ending back at Plymouth in July 1775, Cook made one of the brilliant cruises of all time. He sailed around the world, rubbing the *Resolution's* planks against South Pole ice. Zigging and zagging, coming up for air, it almost seems, to touch at familiar places like Capetown, New Zealand, and Tahiti, then plunging south again, he sailed through blizzards, drank the water of melted polar bergs, ate antarctic bird for Christmas. In the end he proved to all the

world, even to Mr. Dalrymple, that all the continents on earth had long since been discovered—except what might lie useless beneath the miles of southern ice.

It was a long, cold, hard three years to prove, finally and forever, that the unknown continent did not exist on man's earth. He found lone, little Easter Island and saw its huge stone images reported by the Spaniard, Quiros, almost two hundred years before. He saw the Marquesas—again the first since Quiros. And he was welcomed at Tahiti and said a farewell there that was to last, Cook thought, forever.

On that second voyage he had been farther south than any man before him. He had seen mountains and plains of ice, and he had at last located, fixed, and charted islands discovered before but long lost. Above all, he had freed the minds of navigators, merchants, scientists, and kings, who turned their thoughts of empire elsewhere.

That elsewhere thinking turned to China almost as soon as Cook returned from his second voyage in July 1775. In place of the continent, men dreamed of a northwest passage that could carry the ships of English traders across the top of North America, into the Pacific, and west to the rich Orient. It would save them, they said, the long and costly voyages around either Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope. It would be a route to an empire of trade.

A plan was drawn to send two expeditions: one straight across the Atlantic to search the eastern shores of North America; the other to circle around and trace the western coast for the elusive passage. Pickersgill was selected to lead the eastern shore voyage, and again argument started in the matter of selecting a leader for the Pacific expedition. Everyone knew Cook was the best man, but he had been six years at sea in the

seven just past. No one would ask him to go again. He was the best man, no question of that, so much so that he was almost the only man, but he was no longer young—forty-eight, to be precise—and he deserved a rest. This was said often.

Cook offered to go, and once again he stood near the wheel of the *Resolution* and watched England fade astern. His first officer was Lieutenant Gore. The other officers, Lieutenant King and Lieutenant Williamson, were undoubtedly good men, but Gore had been on the *Endeavour*, and it was good to have an old *Endeavour* hand sailing with him. Cook missed the rest when he thought of them—men like his old sailing master, Mr. Molyneaux, dead that time between Batavia and home. But then the new sailing master, Mr. Bligh, was well spoken of.

It was odd that he was off again to the South Seas, this time around Africa and east to the Pacific on his way to America's northwest coast. He had said his farewells at places like Tahiti on his second voyage and had thought they were final. Yet right there at the rail was a Tahitian, Omai, brought to England a year ago on the *Adventure*, the ship that had been supposed to stick close to Cook on his second voyage, but hadn't. Now Omai was on board for passage back to Tahiti with Cook.

Like this one, that second voyage had been planned as a two-ship expedition. But Cook on the *Resolution* had seen the *Adventure* fade into the spume of a northwest gale off New Zealand and hadn't clapped eyes on her again all through the two years of voyaging. When he had returned to England he had found her resting snug in Plymouth. She had left her voyage unfinished, had lost too many men to sickness, and even had lost ten men and a boat at New Zealand. Of the latter only the bloody traces of massacre and a cannibal feast had been found. Captain Furneaux had had an unlucky cruise.

Now it was the *Discovery* that would follow after the *Resolution*, to meet up in Table Bay at the Cape of Good Hope. The *Discovery* had Lieutenant Clerke in command, and Clerke was a good man, an old *Endeavour* hand as well as a veteran of the first cruise of the *Resolution*. Clerke would stick close, and he knew how to do it.

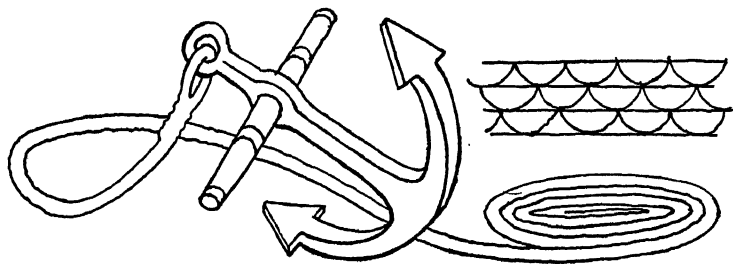
It was July 1776, and if all went as planned the *Discovery* with Clerke would join in at Capetown and together the ships would sail east for the South Seas, drop Omai off at Tahiti, and strike northeast across the Pacific toward that western shore of America where perhaps the northwest passage lay waiting to be discovered.

The plan was made, and Cook as usual was on schedule. He was too experienced a man, though, not to know that easy as it seemed now, there might be events to keep him back. But he would reach the northern tip of America's western shore by midsummer of the next year, if any man could. It had to be searched when the northern ice was at its yearly ebb.

Cook looked back. England had dropped below the curve and was gone. Behind him were Bess and his children. He turned and glanced at the course on the compass by the wheel and thought no more of England or his family.

"Steady as she goes," he said to the helmsman, "we've a world ahead in easy time if we keep her steady."





## XXII. *A Human Bone*

They kept her steady and made Table Bay in October without much to worry them on the way. Early in November Captain Clerke brought the *Discovery* in and dropped anchor. Cook took aboard an ark's load of horses, cattle, goats, rabbits, and poultry to add to the stock he planned to put ashore at New Zealand and Tahiti for the use of future Englishmen.

The two ships sailed again on December first. They celebrated Christmas on a cold and barren waste of rock named Kerguelen's Land. Warm grog served as wassail, and served also to send up carols that startled the birds from their crags and to build fires in English seamen as they lay on a small, cold desert of stone in the sea.

Then Cook sailed on, east by north, direct for New Zealand, passing the first day of 1777 on the way and stopping only at Tasmania's tip for water and fodder for his animals. It was the twelfth of February when the anchor cables on both ships rattled through the pipes and came taut in the waters of Ship Cove in Queen Charlotte's Sound, New Zealand—an anchoring ground familiar to Cook and almost exactly one-half the world's girth from Stepney.

Cook had chosen Ship Cove because wood, water, and food



were there in plenty and its inhabitants were friendly people who knew him well from his first two voyages. But now, as he stood on deck, the anchors fast in the bottom, he thought it strange that instead of the usual fleets of canoes only a few put out from the beach. There were many New Zealanders in each canoe, and they looked the same as the ones he had known before—tall, muscular, light brown skin, shining black hair. Even some of the faces were the same. But they kept their canoes at a little distance, and they weren't smiling a greeting to a friend who had come again. They all stared silently at him, and at Omai and at Gore, who stood with him.

"Captain," Gore said, "they're uneasy about something. I don't care for it."

"Aye, no more do I," Cook answered, "but I've a thought on what's bothering them. The last ship we know of that was here was the *Adventure*, and there was trouble, as Omai no doubt remembers. He was with Furneaux when it happened."

"Ten English killed, according to what I heard," Gore said. "No wonder they're worried, thinking we'll touch off a twelve-pounder at them any minute. And perhaps we should."

"There'll be no shooting," Cook said. "There'll be no reprisals of any sort. No one knows the truth of what happened between Furneaux' men and the Maoris. And more to the point, we need them friendly. There's food and water to be got."

Cook turned to Omai. "Call to them. Tell them we come again as friends and that we have presents, if they'll come aboard."

Omai did his best, and a few Maoris boarded the *Resolution* and were treated to a reception that sent them back to shore with news that all was well, that there was no need to fear Cook's anger, and no fire in the great weapons of the white men.

There were, in fact, iron tools and cloth to be had if one brought pigs or fruit or fish to the ships.

In the next few days the New Zealanders lost all their reluctance and came by canoe in great number from up and down the coast. They stretched the village at Ship Cove a mile along the shore. Even a chief named Kahoola came aboard, though other Maoris told Omai that Kahoola was the chief who had led the attack on Furneaux' men. He had even swung the club that had killed the leader of the white men. Kahoola, it seemed, was more feared than loved by his people. Some of them urged Cook to take his revenge and kill Kahoola on the spot.

It wasn't until February 16 that the full story of the massacre was learned. That day, at dawn, Cook led a party of five boats up the sound in search of fodder for the cattle. With him he took Omai, to help talk to any Maoris they might meet on the way. They found a grassy spot, cut enough fodder to fill two launches, loaded up, and coasted back toward the ships. As they went they watched the shore for another field of grass.

It may be that Cook ordered the boats to beach at Grass Cove only to see if its name fit its description, but this had been the place from which Furneaux' men had not returned. In any case, while his men were cutting grass he and Omai searched the area.

He wasn't sure exactly what he was looking for. It had been three years since Furneaux' men had vanished from Grass Cove, and it was not likely that traces would have been left in the first place. Working slowly along the swale near the water's edge, he and Omai came upon a broken bit of bone, but whether it was the bone of English, Maori, dog, or pig they could not tell. Farther on they found a bit of painted wood—perhaps from a small boat.

By this time Cook and Omai were near a grove of trees, and, looking up from his search of the ground, Cook saw a small group of Maoris watching him from a short distance.

He called to them, beckoning them to come nearer. They approached with the gestures reserved for a chief, smiling and talking easily.

"Omai," Cook said, "speak to them with friendship. Talk a while about what interests them, but then ask them of the English sailors who died here."

Although Omai had been loud for revenge and shocked at Cook's friendliness for those who had killed his countrymen, he did as he was asked, his Tahitian being well enough understood by the Maoris. After some talk the story of Furneaux' ten-man boat crew was told by the Maori who seemed to be the leader of the little band.

"It was a day of bad things," he said. "The white men had landed the fat canoe they paddle backward and were eating their sunset meal around their fire, a little toward the mountain from the sea. Among them was one who was black, and he was left to watch their canoe. One of our people came to him with a stone ax to give for a bit of iron or white tapa or no one now knows what thing. The black white man took the ax but would give no thing in return. In anger, the one who was Maori leaped into the canoe and took hold of a thing and was running when the black white man seized one of the paddles and struck him heavily on the head.

"The Maori cry he sent up was echoed from cave stones on distant mountains. Those of us who were with our chief, Kahoola, a little toward the wind from there, heard the cry. We seized our clubs and spears and ran toward the noise.

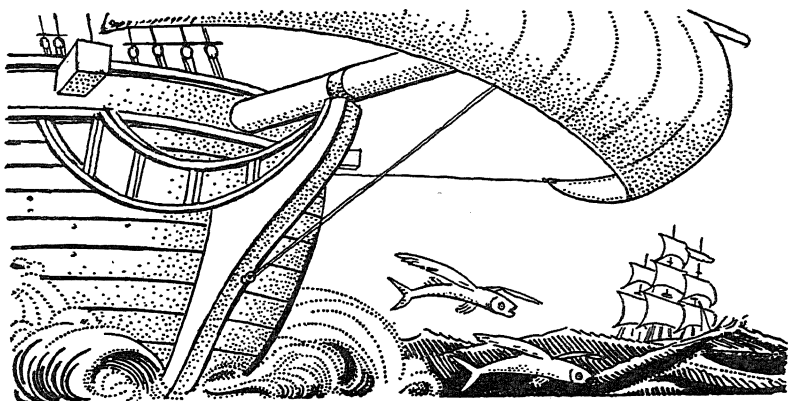
"When we were near the place where the boat was, we came

upon the one who had been struck. Blood ran from his head and he had trouble telling the mountains from the sea. Our anger was great, and we ran on.

"The whites who had been eating had started up at the Maori cry and met us near their fire. Twice the thunder of their weapons that strike beyond a man's reach roared in our ears. Two of us fell in blood, but we were many and hard with anger. Before their thunder came again we were on them. Oh, it was a fine, wild Maori fight. Our clubs and spears finished them in the sound of our cries.

"When it was over, our chief, Kahoola, told us to take the dead into the mountains so that there would be no pieces for their friends to find. This we did, and later we were sorry and thought that a great many whites would come and kill us all with thunder weapons. But none came, and after a while we came back to this place and lived as before. Now we have heard that you, the chief of the whites, have come and have talked with Kahoola, and all is well, though some would wish you to take revenge on Kahoola so we would all forget the day of bad things."





### XXIII. *Omai's Return*

Of all the people on the ships, Omai was the one who wondered most why Cook had not killed Kahoola, the Maori. But when the captain took the *Resolution* and *Discovery* out of Ship Cove, out of the sound of New Zealand, and east across the Pacific, even Omai began to forget his bewilderment. They were heading across the sea toward Tahiti, his home.

Besides, since Omai had left Tahiti with Furneaux and had gone to England he had learned that there were many things about the English he would never really understand. He had spent more than a year on the English island and had found it strange. He had seen white people in numbers so great he doubted that all his home islands together could hold them without crowding them into the sea.

The English had feasted him and had taken him before their council of elders. They had shown him the great stone temples of their priests, their wondrous houses—huge and cold—their animals that carried men, their iron tools. They even cooked in

iron pots. Omai had learned to talk with their strange, spitting tongue and to eat their overcooked food, and he had learned enough not to break their tapus. But for all their strange doings the English were good. They had given him metal pots, a musket, a sword, an ax, nails, a fowling piece, and knives. Now they were taking him home, where his wealth would make him an important man, especially with Captain Cook, the Tapene Tute of the islands, at his side.

Omai had to wait another six months. It was the end of August 1777 before Cook finally brought the *Resolution* and *Discovery* to his old anchoring ground at Matavai Bay in Tahiti. They had sailed lazily from New Zealand, stopping in at islands in the Cook group and resting among the Friendly Islands, feeding their livestock and exploring. Cook knew he had time. It would do no good to reach the coast of America before late spring opened the ice of the northern seas and left him a full summer to search for the northwest passage.

When Cook brought his ships into the bay and saw the green slopes reaching back and away from its beaches into the hills and its mountains standing high behind, he caught a little of what he knew must be Omai's excitement at the sight. Omai was home.

When the first Tahitian canoes came out and ranged alongside, Cook watched Omai lean out from the rail and examine the paddlers, then turn away with a grunt. Cook looked too and realized the reason for Omai's grunt. These Tahitians were common people. In the whole first phalanx of canoes there was no one of rank. Omai was waiting for someone more fitting to greet one who possessed iron pots and fire weapons.

Then, with the halyards letting go with a rattle, with shouts of

men on the yardarms taking in sail, and with the rumble of capstans and thuds of booms being rigged for smallboats, the *Resolution* was secured from the sea once more, and Tahitians roamed her decks. Not far across the bay the *Discovery* came to anchor in another swarm of canoes.

Not long after their arrival at Tahiti, Cook called the crews of both ships together in the waist of the *Resolution*. When they had assembled he spoke to them, standing above them near the quarterdeck ladder.

"I have matters to discuss with you," he began, "especially one which concerns a privilege English sailors have always tasted as their right. The decision on that shall be yours by vote.

"It is time, first, that you knew the eventual purpose of our voyage. When we leave here in December, our orders are to make our way to the northwest coast of America, arriving there as early in the spring as ice will have left its rivers. Then we are to coast north along the shore until we find, or until we know it cannot exist, a passage east to the Atlantic.

"Of all the sailors in the world you who have made this long voyage around the stretch of continents know best how important the discovery of such a passage would be. Its importance to the world is great—and greater to England. His Majesty's Parliament has posted a reward of £20,000 to be given such of His Majesty's subjects as shall first discover a passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in the Northern Hemisphere, as well as another large sum for those who first cross the eighty-ninth degree of north latitude. I have little doubt you will be willing to try to qualify for either or both purses.

"I feel it proper, however, to tell you that in the long voyage from here to America these Society Islands may be the last place we shall see where food and water are plentiful. We shall

venture far north into cold climates. You will understand the hardships that, in all probability, lie ahead of us and the necessity to exercise the utmost economy in our use of supplies. In all particulars save one I shall give orders as to the use of our stores in the manner that seems fitting to me. That one particular I leave to your decision. I do so because it concerns a privilege of sailors not to be denied by any captain's order—grog. As with all our foodstuffs, we must guard, if we can, against having to shorten rations in cold weather.

"In these islands we are taking on a large supply of coconuts, the milk of which you know to be excellent both to tongue and body. Would it not be wise to do without grog on all days except Saturdays—when we can scarcely drink the health of our friends at home in coconut milk—for as long as our supply of the nuts shall last?

"Grog is a matter close to a sailor's life, and I leave the answer to you. Serve it daily now and chance the failure of our stock in cold weather to the north, or save it now and drink it then—as you will."

Cook finished his speech, waited a moment, and called for a decision. "Shall we save the grog for later—aye or nay?"

From the deck below him rose a chorus of ayes, without, so far as he could hear, a dissenting shout, though he suspected there were those who remained silent.

Thus it was that two Royal Navy ships served coconut milk in place of rum, except on Saturday nights. It was a most unusual event in naval history.

The following days, however, were not at all unusual. They were spent working. The ships' seams, which by now had started enough to take in a quantity of water, were calked. Water barrels were cleaned and filled at the streams that



flowed down from Tahiti's mountains. Coconuts were carried on board in great numbers. What pigs could be had were penned on deck forward. The animals already on board—the bull, cows, horses, sheep, geese, and ducks—were put ashore to graze and feed, some to remain there to stock the islands.

During these days Cook was initiated into two customs he had not seen on his previous voyages. He was asked to fight on the side of Tahiti in a forthcoming war with Moorea, an honor he refused even after seeing the glorious fleets of double canoes large enough to carry feather-cloaked chiefs on raised decks and long rows of warriors at the paddles.

The second custom he found more to his liking. One day the chief, Otu, came on board with his mother, three sisters, and eight women retainers. At first Cook thought that this tonnage of Tahitian womanhood had boarded his ship in order to ask passage to another harbor. He soon discovered that they had plans more personal to him. They had, they said, heard that he was suffering from rheumatism and had come to cure him.

Cook was forced to admit that his joints had been paining; and rather than offend so many, so large, and so illustrious a weight of women, he lay down on a mattress in his cabin and put himself at their mercy. What went through his mind as the first three women—each well over two hundred pounds—approached him, huge hands flexing, may be guessed. What actually happened he described later in his journal.

"They began to squeeze me with both hands from head to foot, but particularly on the parts where the pain was lodged, till they made my bones crack and my flesh a perfect mummy." He was glad when they stopped, but his aches were fewer. And

after four more similar struggles on successive evenings and mornings, he was cured.

By now the ships were ready. Their holds were filled with stores. Their entire stock of salt had been used to preserve meat. Seams were tight and rigging renewed. It was the end of September, and Cook still had Omai to put ashore and establish, and other islands in the group to visit. At three in the afternoon of September 29, 1777, the *Resolution* and *Discovery* weighed anchor, caught an easterly breeze, and moved out of Matavai Bay for the last time.

After a short stop at Moorea, Cook took his ships to the island of Huahine, in the northwest corner of the group. There Omai would make his home again among his people.

At Tahiti, Cook had watched Omai closely and had seen him squander his metalwork, his feathers, his bits of clothing, axes, and other English goods given him to ensure his comfort. Cook had seen other Tahitians laugh at Omai—as on the occasion when Omai tried to ride a horse as the English did and was thrown three times before he could so much as settle in the saddle. Cook had noticed the worthless people Omai had gathered around himself and had seen him become a man who was neither chief nor common man, neither friend nor family to anyone. And Cook had spoken long and sharply to Omai.

Here, at Huahine, Omai was a different man. When Cook made his formal call on the chiefs of the island to tell them of Omai's return, Omai stood apart and, for the first time, began a real return to his old life. Tears were in his eyes—partly, he told Cook, because he was home again, finished with travel and far people, and partly because he would see Tapene Tute no more.

Then, one by one, Omai made offerings to his gods. He laid a bundle of red feathers at the feet of a priest and chanted a prayer. The feathers were followed by cloth, an ax, and so on through his wealth, each item carrying with it a chant that told of where he had been, of the new friends he had found, the wonders he had seen, and of his gratitude to his gods for the miracle of his return to the land of his fathers.

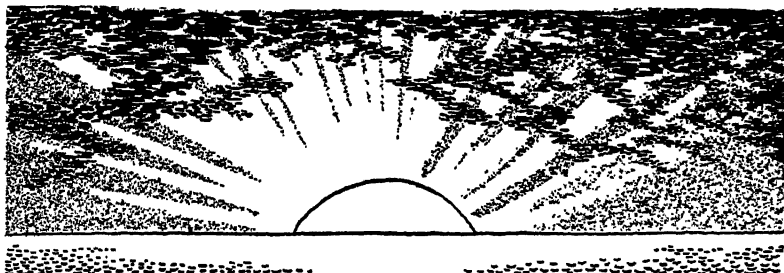
When Omai had finished, the priest sent the offerings by runner to a temple across the island. Then Omai sat beside Cook and was silent while Cook spoke.

"Omai is my friend," he began. "He has been with me on a long voyage. He was carried from here to my land, where the great king and all his chiefs received him with honor. So well was he liked in the far-off country that he was given many things of iron, color, and great usefulness. These he has brought back to his own people, that you all may gain by his long adventure. It is our hope that here, on your island, you will give him a part of the land so that he may build a home and grow food for himself and for the servants he will need to care for his many things. If you give him land he will live among you and show you the use of his fire weapons in hunting birds, the growing of new foods his seeds will produce, and the care of the animals he has brought to these islands." Cook paused and gazed around the circle of chiefs. "If not," he went on, "we shall carry him with us to Ra'i-atea, where he shall have land."

At this a chief rose and answered with words that Omai could not interpret for Cook without a broad smile. Although Cook had understood well enough, Omai repeated the chief's speech, word for word. "He says," Omai explained, "that since the whole island is yours, Tapene Tute, at your smallest wish, you may give any part of it you want to me, your friend."

Thus Omai returned. Cook's men built him a house on a good piece of land that stretched along the beach for two hundred yards and back to the hills behind. They started his garden of vines, pineapples, melons, shaddocks, and many other foods. There they left him, surrounded by plenty and protected by the name of Cook. On December 9 the *Resolution* and *Discovery* left the Society Islands astern and rode northward, strong winds over their starboard beams.





## XXIV. *Atooië*

Just after daybreak on Christmas Eve of 1777 Cook was up and in his cabin, planning for the day and the days to come. On his table he again had spread a new section of chart. At the bottom were Tahiti and the Society Islands. Stretching north and a little east from there was the track the ship had made in the sixteen days just past.

Up and down the right-hand side lay the west coast of the Americas, crudely explored and drawn in by guess and by rough observations made long ago by Spaniards and Englishmen. Sighting from Tahiti to the north coast of America, Cook could see that the two ships were still falling away west of their course. With soft and variable winds from the east, they had made good only three hundred and forty odd leagues from the Societies, and they had been unable to lay the northeast line to America.

Cook was not worried. The northern winter had barely begun, and the Admiralty's timetable scheduled his approach to the far north for midsummer. Meanwhile they would carry the easterly winds, probably to about forty degrees north of the equator, and there hope to pick up westerlies that would carry them to the coast.

He hoped the stores would last. In all the stretch of ocean ahead—nearly a thousand leagues to go—there was no land on his chart. True, there had been old Spanish stories of islands to the north, seen and touched at by galleons in commerce to and from the Philippines, but the Spanish were always close-mouthed about their discoveries, and in any case they could not have charted the islands accurately in those days before precise instruments.

From the deck above, Cook could hear the sounds of the quarterdeck watch moving about. He was half aware of the creak of timbers from below, an easy sound pitched and timed by an easy breeze. The day was beginning as had all the days since the Societies.

He was folding his ship's papers and preparing to make an entry in his journal when he heard a distant cry—"Land ho!"

It was a small and desolate island the men of the *Resolution* and *Discovery* found on Christmas Eve. They hove to in its lee, though it was a lee that served only to still the seas. Boat parties went ashore. They found no water and no people, but they brought back two hundredweight of fish and many turtles. In addition, two men from the *Discovery* contrived to become lost on the small, flat, almost treeless island—how, neither Captain Cook nor Captain Clerke could understand. One of the lost men returned after a full day spent wandering, drinking turtle blood in his thirst, and refreshing himself by lying in the shallows of the lagoon. The other was found a day later, sick for water, burned by the sun, and weak with fear.

Cook kept his ships at Christmas Island, as they named it, for nine days, waiting to observe an eclipse of the sun that permitted them to check their navigation, and regulate their

newfangled chronometers. At dawn on the second day of the new year of 1778, they sailed away to the north.

The land they sighted sixteen days later was of another sort entirely. Again it was just at the graying of dawn that the cry came from the masthead. Cook heard it from the quarterdeck. Here might be the kind of luck an explorer hoped for but never counted on in his calculations. There was nothing on his chart, nothing in his books, nothing in what the world knew that indicated land across the twenty-first northern parallel at the one hundred fifty-ninth degree of longitude. He had planned against, and hoped for, a landing place somewhere between the southern seas and the northwest coast of America.

He took up his long glasses and braced himself against the wheel box, facing off the starboard bow toward a low, broken bank of clouds at the horizon. In a short while they would be able to see what sort of land lay below those clouds. There were stories down through the years that the Spanish, sailing their gold trade ships across the Pacific, had come upon a great group of islands north of the equator, and then had lost them again. There was one tale, he recalled now, of an English captain who had "smuggled," as the English put it, one of the secret charts from a Spanish ship. There were reported to be notes on the chart indicating great islands somewhere north of the true course from the lands of Cortés to Manila. But no one had been able to find them.

The story came back to him now as the morning passed toward noon, and as he looked through the glass toward the bank of clouds. It came back because below the clouds and towering up through them was an island of a sort to excite an explorer's eye. Though its main body was under the earth's

curve, still it filled the glass and beyond. Range on range of hills seemed to fold in and out of the haze. They rose in the purple-blue that green land, rock, and horizon mist make when they blend in a distant eye.

Cook lowered his glass. It would take many hours of tacking into the easterly wind to reach the island, but reach it he knew they must. An island so large and mountainous had to be explored and charted at last, for other men to find. Then too, mountains meant clouds, rain, and fresh water streams, to fill the ships' casks. They also meant trees, wood, and food.

"Land dead ahead!" The cry came a second time since day-break. It was another island, separated from the first by a stretch of misty horizon. It looked smaller and not so high as the first, but it was dead ahead. There would be no long beat to windward to reach this island.

The breeze freshened, and by noon Cook had brought his ships to within two leagues of land and had sighted what seemed to be a third island, off the port bow. By then Cook knew he had made an important discovery. He also knew he had too little time to explore and survey so large an area as the islands seemed to cover. Perhaps, if there were people here, he could learn enough from them to know whether or not these islands warranted another cruise by an English ship. But these islands broke a long, landless stretch of sea, and to get to know any people would mean learning new ways and a new tongue well enough to find out the facts of their islands.

"Ahoy, the deck," the lookout called from above. "Canoes putting out from the beach, two points off the port bow."

Moving swiftly the canoes approached the ship. In each were three or four men who looked precisely like the Tahitians Cook knew so well and had left so far astern. And when he



spoke to them in the Tahitian language, telling them he came in friendship, they understood and answered in the same tongue, changed a little and softer in sounds, but the same. They were astonished by the ships, and wary. For a long time they kept their canoes well away, but they were unarmed and friendly.

After much persuasion the islanders came near enough and grew bold enough to trade fish and sweet potatoes for medals lowered over the sides on planks. Cook was once again at the delicate work of making useful friends of a strange people.

Coasting slowly, the two ships searched for a harbor, trailing convoys of canoes until dark. During the night Cook kept the *Resolution* and *Discovery* reaching back and forth off shore, ready to resume the search at dawn. On board his ship there was excitement of a quiet sort; the men had seen much of the seas and were used to discovery, but they felt that this was perhaps the greatest of the islands they had found. Then, too, it was a green land, the home of people, a place of fresh food and water and perhaps gaiety ashore after the confinement of the ship.

With dawn the canoes were around them again. This time the islanders came aboard. Big, strong, and agile, they came over the rail and stood silently for a moment on deck. From the hang of their jaws and the stare of their eyes, Cook knew they were wildly astonished by the ship, its parts, and its people.

They moved about the deck, darting from side to side, gesturing, exclaiming among themselves, and touching everything in sight. Finally they began to pick up loose marlin spikes, buckets, knives, bits of line, anything not secured. They made no effort to hide their intention of making off with every part of the ship and her gear they could lift.

Cook guessed that no ship and no white men had visited

there before—at least not in the memory of the natives now alive. From their language and their obvious feeling that the possessions of one were fair game for all, he knew they were related in culture to the Tahitians and Maoris. He wondered at a race of men that must have sailed canoes across thousands of leagues of the Pacific, settling where they landed and living in great numbers on the hundreds of islands he had seen and probably on thousands more.

At nine in the morning Cook ordered his second officer, Williamson, to take three armed boats in search of a landing place and water. The boats were lowered at the usual shouted orders and to the vast surprise of the natives. Then, just as Williamson was pulling away, Cook heard a cry from forward. Running with long, swift strides, as though hounds were trailing him, a native was heading for the rail, the ship's meat cleaver gripped in his right hand. Three sailors gave chase, but the islander, without slacking his speed, dived in a long arc up and over the side. With the cleaver flashing at the end of one outstretched arm, he curved into the sea with scarcely a splash. He had no sooner disappeared beneath the water than he was up and swimming toward his canoe. In a few strokes he was there, and in an instant he was paddling off. Williamson's boats gave chase, but by the time the rowers made fifty feet the canoe had skimmed a hundred toward shore.

A little after three that afternoon Cook brought the two ships to anchor and prepared to go ashore at a village where Williamson had found both a landing spot and fresh water. With three armed boats and a dozen marines, Cook headed for land. On the beach before the village, at the foot of a narrow valley between high-walled mountains that ran back from the sea, several hundred natives waited.

By now it should have become a usual moment for Cook to be moving toward shore in a boat, riding long swells to a beach where a crowd of Pacific islanders waited. But it was a moment that never lost its edge. He could feel it as the boat caught the last wave and rose toward the sand.

As Cook stepped from the boat every islander in sight fell prostrate on the beach. He stopped in surprise. Then, walking slowly toward the nearest group of natives, he made signs for them to rise. As they rose a single voice began to chant. Strident and quick in its rhythm, soft in its words, long and without melody in its tones, it was a chant that captured the mind. It died away on a long note held the length of a breath, then choked off as though strangled.

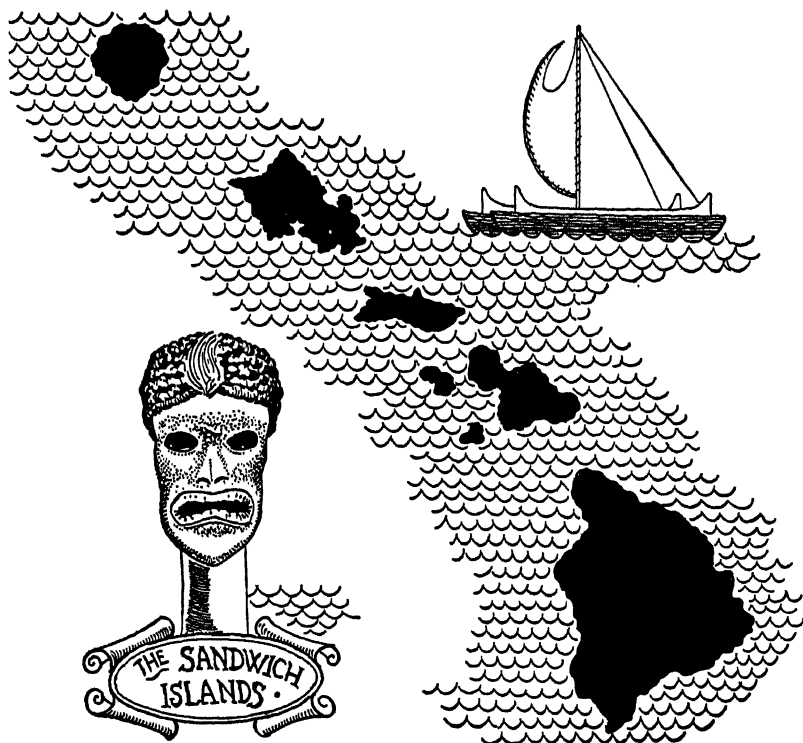
The islanders brought small pigs and plantains as gifts, and Cook presented them with knives and nails in return. Then, talking to one who seemed to be a leader, he learned that there were two islands instead of the three the English thought them to be. And to the east and south there were other and larger islands, hidden by distance.

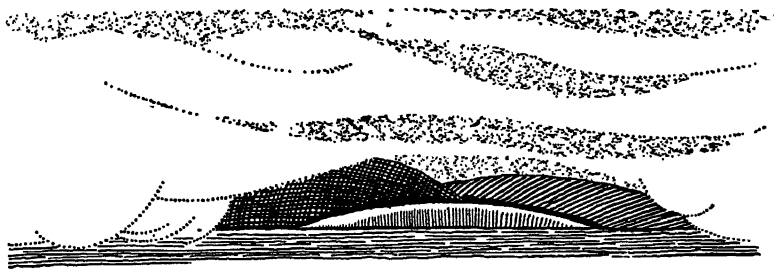
For two weeks Cook held his ships at the two islands, forced to move from one to the other, shifting anchorage frequently, always searching for a lee. Water and food were carried on board by boat parties that frequently left the ships at one spot on the coast and rejoined them at another.

When possible Cook went on exploring trips. The islands were pleasant, though poor in soil in many places, and inhabited by a frank and cheerful people. He was tempted to explore and chart the other islands they spoke of, but the season was shortening and the final objective of his voyage lay ahead.

On February 2 he took his departure, standing away to the northeast for the coast of America. He knew he had made a

discovery of importance and, carefully plotting the latitude and longitude, he wrote on his chart beside the two islands the name of his patron, calling them the Sandwich Islands. Not for many years—after merchants, whalers, and warships of many nations had made them the key to Pacific commerce—did Cook's Sandwich Islands come to be known by their native name, Hawaii.





## XXV. *Northeast Passage*

Through the almost perpetual fog of May, Cook inched his ships along a coast that had gone properly north for a while but now was swinging west. New Albion, discovered by Drake and explored by Foul Weather Jack Byron, was behind him, south and to the east. No Englishman before him had worked his way so far up the American coast.

Cook had brought his ships from the Sandwich Islands across a markless sea and made the American continent early in March. The land was a long, straight coast, where they sighted it, forested to its shore, harborless to the horizon. There was stormy weather. The ships were in need of repair; the *Resolution's* main rigging was going at the core but it held together long after Cook had begun to look at it with a worried eye. Searching for shelter, they had beat on north, only to be driven offshore by the wind, beyond sight of land. Ships and men were both worn by time and the weather.

Finally they had made land again and through the mist had found a sheltered bay, wide and sufficient of bend for a lee, hemmed by forests and backed by mountains with springtime snows at their heads. The air was warm in the sun, twenty degrees colder at night.

Natives—Indians, Cook's men called them—had come near in bark canoes and sung in a wild tongue and traded like masters, charging iron for timber and water. Cook's men cut and finished spruce tree spars and set fresh rigging to the chains and blocks. Bear, wolves, deer, fox, and fish were caught, and water flowed down from the mountains and filled their casks.

Then out of the bay and north they sailed, and at once a storm seized them and drove them off the coast until they hove to in a hurricane sea. The *Resolution* sprung a seam and took water in her coal hold. When the storm died they moved slowly on, pumping until at last land and shelter were found.

They put in at an island-guarded inlet once, which quickened hopes of the passage to England—hopes that faded against solid shore and mountain walls. Four hundred miles, it had been, of making way past a hidden mass of coast that leaned west, maddening to men who searched for a way to the east. They went on. And soon it was May.

The wind had eased and the rain had gone with the dawn. Cook noted the conditions and gazed calmly across the gray water. The *Resolution's* seams needed calking below the water-line. The bay that surrounded them needed exploring; before both night and fog had settled it had seemed that the island lay off an eastward-bearing inlet—another passage hope to be followed through. Time pressed. He turned to the sailing master. "Mr. Bligh," he said, "is the ship prepared for careening?"

"Aye, sir," Bligh answered, "she is—including a special berth for the fool who went down with the anchor. Snapped his leg, but nothing more."

"Then take a strain on the cables and heel her."

The leak was exposed and fixed, the *Resolution* tight again, tight enough at least. Cook took the ships out of the island



bay and north into the mainland inlet, until, with another dawn, the almost constant mist lifted for a time. But the inlet led only to its own rocky beach and head. Cook called it Prince William Sound and turned again for the sea and the long, continental coast.

On the twenty-first of May 1778 the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, sailing southwest along the perverse hook of America, rounded a high bluff. Beyond them stretched an empty ocean. For a few hours Cook wondered if they had cleared the western tip of the continent and were at last entering a northern and perhaps eastward-leading sea.

A short time later that hope died and a new one grew. In the sea to the west, land rose again above the horizon, land that was a range of mountains higher than the snowline of May. But to the northeast a wide bay cut deeply into the coast. It was the largest and most likely opening they had found on all the American shore. From the beaches at its distant sides smoke rose in lazy columns.

Cook worked his ships inland slowly in variable winds. He waited out fierce tides that drove down the bay and caught favorable slants of air when he could. On May 30 they caught the flood tide a little after one in the morning and rode it until it was slack at seven. Then the anchors went over again. They had made way, but it was slow work. A column of smoke on the eastern shore that had been off the starboard bow at sunset was still off the quarter.

At noon two canoes were sighted coming toward the ship from far across the inlet. In each a lone man flailed the water to hold a course across the ebb tide and slice through its rips.

When Cook's men waved the two natives close aboard they eased into the lee of the *Resolution*. One of them immediately



roared into a long and noisy speech, not a syllable of which Cook could understand. The Indian, dark skinned, his face painted jet black, harangued the ship and gestured toward the shore. But Cook was waiting for the tide and had no time for visits. He exchanged gifts with the natives and talked to them with gestures. He noticed that they carried long, iron knives and wore beads of sky-blue glass. Europeans had touched near enough to this inlet for these men to trade for European goods.

By the first of June, Cook had sailed seventy leagues inland, reading the signs in the freshening water, in the muddy current, and in the flotsam, which told him this was no ocean-to-ocean passage. Bligh had taken boats a few leagues farther and reported that when the sea tide ebbed the water was fresh. Here was a water-shed river, a great river and a discovery, but not a passage to Baffin's Bay or Hudson's Bay to the east.

On June 6 the two ships cleared the river, stretched away across the inlet entrance, and headed southwest along the coast. The days that followed were a drab succession of mists and drizzles through which the coastline seldom thrust its rugged shape. As often as it did, however, Cook noted its increasingly broken shore and the June snows that crept down from the hilltops almost to the beaches.

On the nineteenth they were coursing a channel between offshore islands and the mainland. Cook, in the *Resolution*, led Captain Clerke, in the *Discovery*, by two miles. The air was light, the day clear for a change, and the channel broad, deep, and free from danger. As usual Cook was braced at his post by the rail, searching the coast through his glass.

Suddenly the roar of a cannon rolled across the water and swept past the *Resolution*. Another boomed, and another. Cook wheeled toward the *Discovery*, instinctively remembering the

details of the channel astern. For a moment there was silence, then three faint echoes trailed across the water from the mainland hills. Abeam of the *Discovery*, Cook could see three puffs of smoke—one faint against the water, one breaking up in the breeze, and one tight and white near the ship.

It was the signal to speak, and though the channel had been clear, Cook wondered if the *Discovery* had struck a ledge his own lookouts had missed. He ordered a boat over the side and off to the other ship, while sheets were slacked and the *Resolution's* way lost.

In a short time the boat returned with Captain Clerke in its stern. He came over the side without the haste of trouble.

"No trouble, Mr. Clerke?" Cook asked.

"No, Captain," Clerke said, "but an incident out of the ordinary I thought you should know of. An hour or more ago we sighted two canoes putting out from shore. Like you, I imagine, we'd seen many natives through the glass, and for a time we paid these little attention. But within an hour it became apparent they were following us. When we hit a soft spot a short time back they hauled close enough to speak. We understood nothing, but the Indian in the first canoe made signs that he wanted to show us something.

"Well, we were in a soft spot, making little way as it was, and we were well up in your wake, so I motioned him in under the stern. Indian or no, he took off his fur cap and bowed in European court fashion. That made me watch him closely. He paddled in under the rail and pointed to a box he had in the bottom of his canoe. Then he motioned until we finally lowered him a line. He fastened the line to the box, signaled us to haul in, and paddled off toward shore as though his only mission in life had been accomplished.

"We opened the box—more out of curiosity than intelligence, I fear—and inside was a piece of paper, not skin or bark but pure white paper.

"On the paper is a legend in a language we think to be Russian, though what it says we have no thoughts on. But it carries the date of this year, 1778, and in the body of the legend is the date 1776."

"Aye," said Cook, "were this a land like the Sandwich Islands—a place meant for man—I confess it would be something less than pleasant to know we're not the first here. But in this dreary part of the globe 'tis almost a comfort to know the Russians have been about and perhaps still are."

"Even though the Crown loses a claim to land thereby," Clerke said, "I feel the same. This barren coast is worth the trouble only if it gives way to a passage east. And that I'm more and more in doubt of."

"Aye, perhaps," Cook answered, "but we shall find where the continent ends and look for a way past it to the north. Even then, unless it's a narrow continent, the sea will be north of ice, perhaps even in spring and autumn."

On June 27 they found the end of the continent. The coast suddenly broke into a southwesterly chain of islands with channels into open sea to the north. Cook put in at one the natives called Unalaska. The people wore bits of European clothing and showed no surprise at the ships, at iron, or at white men. They showed Cook another piece of paper bearing a message in Russian. They traded briefly and then went ashore with little show of interest.

Early in July, Cook put his ships through the channel at Unalaska and headed northwest. He had rounded the continental corner.

On August 9, after crossing bays and sighting points and treeless, grassy shores, Cook brought the *Resolution* and *Discovery* to anchor under a point that he called Cape Prince of Wales. He had passed the sixty-fifth degree of northern latitude with summer nearing its end, and still the continent held to the north. The time of open water was running low.

Cook knew the coast of Asia was not far to the west, so he took a short haul straight out from the American coast and found no more than thirteen leagues separating the two vast continents. He fixed the coasts and their strait on his charts and then broke off northeast for America again.

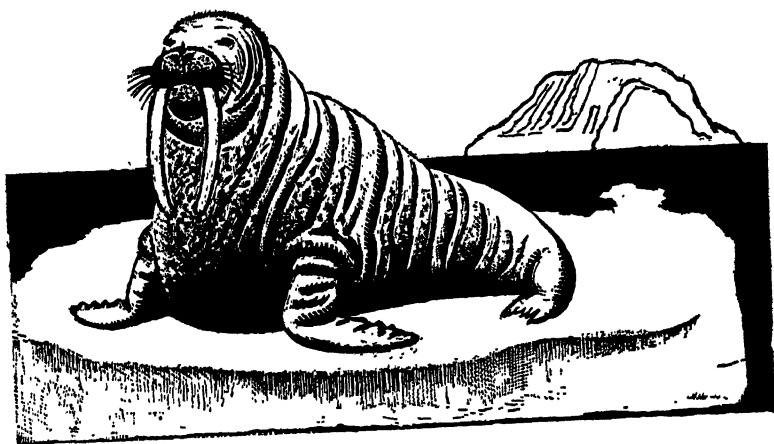
They sighted no land until August 14, when it edged over the horizon on the starboard bow, low and bare. They drove on along it, making way to the east at last and knowing that they had in all probability cleared America's northwest tip and were headed for the Atlantic thousands of leagues away.

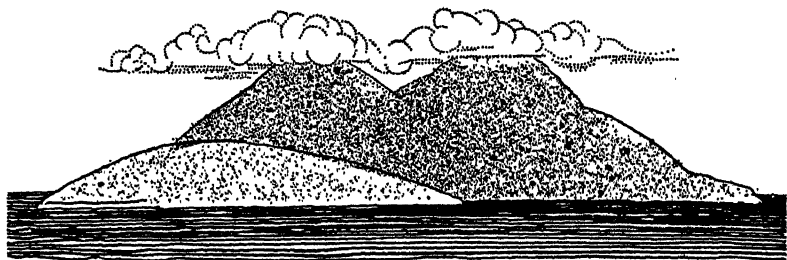
On the seventeenth a strong gale gave way to calm and fog, and as the day passed the temperature dropped. Then a strange bright light crept up from the mist ahead. Suddenly out of the fog came the sight Cook had known he would see but that he had expected much later in the season. A tumbled rampart of ice loomed on the port bow and stretched away east and west as far as he could see.

The summer's search for the passage was over. The season was late. Had they arrived late in June, Cook knew, more than seventy-nine degrees north, only twenty-odd degrees from the pole though it was, they might have been able to pass between the east-running coast and the ice wall of the north. Now it was too late. In the narrow gut of open sea that still separated the barrier ice from the shore, huge icebergs clogged the way, and ahead even this passage narrowed down to danger.

They replenished their supply of meat with walrus from the ice, and they added berries and wood and water they found along the shore going south. As they went, Cook made his decision. He would winter in the Sandwich Islands and try this forsaken coast again the next spring. He was long from home and his men were ship-worn, but his orders were to find the passage if it was there.

South they sailed to Unalaska. There they calked seams and took on supplies. They finally found some Russians—traders who exchanged information and food and drink with them. On October 26 Cook struck straight out across the Pacific, south for the Sandwich Islands he had found coming north and had left unexplored, islands where the weather was warm for wintering.





## XXVI. *Hawaii*

From Unalaska south to the Sandwich Islands was a long month's voyage. For many of Cook's people it was a sad voyage—one that meant another year away from home, another winter, another spring, and another summer's push to the north before the *Resolution* and *Discovery* would set a course toward England. But Cook was an explorer, a navigator, and a Navy man who read his orders to mean that he must find a passage or prove that none existed. He had done neither, and though he knew there were those below who were saying they had done enough and who were calling for a homeward course, he had decided to pass another winter in the Pacific.

No one could say, and certainly Cook never did say, that deep in the back of his mind he himself failed to think about Bess and his children, about John Walker of Whitby, about his home. He had sailed from Plymouth a year and a half before, and now he had committed himself and his men to the sea for what could be another two years.

But the voyage from Unalaska to the Sandwich Islands was not entirely sad. It was also a voyage from the cold, gray north, from treeless shores and mists, to warm green islands lying in

the sun. And when they reached them, and found anchorage for the winter, Cook was able to write, “. . . there were few on board, who now lamented our having failed in our endeavour to find a Northern passage homeward last summer. To this disappointment we owed our having it in our power to revisit the Sandwich Isles and to enrich our voyage with a discovery which, though the last, seemed in every respect to be the most important that had hitherto been made by Europeans throughout the extent of the Pacific Ocean.”

Those words are the end of Captain Cook's journal. They are happy words and they describe the emotions of men who had been long on a cold sea when they dropped anchor in the bay that was Kealakekua, on the west coast of the island of Hawaii, largest of the Sandwich group.

Closing around the ships was a ragged crescent of shore, its high cliffs dipping toward beaches at its tips. Even the cliffs themselves carried swales of green. And behind the shore rose a slope that angled upward, not steeply but away and past the clouds. Mauna Loa, the Hawaiians called it, the great mountain. From Kealakekua it was a mountain that looked to be the whole island, and it was an island that had taken Cook seven weeks to circumnavigate.

On shore there were fresh water, pigs, fish, vegetables, and salt. But more important, at least to the spirits of men so long from home, there were people. Islanders swarmed on deck and swung from the rigging until the *Resolution* heeled at anchor. Over the water of the bay a thousand Hawaiians drove slender canoes at a thousand angles, and in the water near the ships hundreds more swam about like shoals of fish.

Over the bay rose songs, chants, and shouts. With dances on deck, with laughter, and with explicit gestures, the Hawaiians

showed admiration highly pleasing to the English. Above them all, on the quarterdeck with Cook, two chiefs stood by, keeping order among their people. Both were tall men, well over six feet, and broad. Kaneena was a strong-featured, handsome man with dark amber skin. Pareea was lighter in color, ugly of face, and one of the friendliest men Cook had met in the Pacific. The two chiefs remained at his side, quietly now, presiding over the hubbub below.

On the main deck a sharp cry and a surge of Englishmen and Hawaiians suddenly broke the spell. Shouts of "thief" mingled with Hawaiian words cried out in excitement. In an instant Kaneena had vaulted from the quarterdeck and was forcing his way through the portside mob. Those who saw him coming fell back. Others he shoved aside until he reached the center of the struggle. Two Hawaiians were held by sailors who claimed that knives had been stolen. Kaneena faced the two islanders and quietly ordered them to return the knives.

Then, still speaking calmly, Kaneena told both Hawaiians to leave the ship. "Go," he said, pointing to the shore. At once one of the two ran to the rail and climbed down to one of the canoes nested alongside the *Resolution*. The other man started slowly toward the side, looking back as he went. Suddenly he darted into the crowd. To Cook, watching from above, it seemed that the man dissolved in a sea of people.

With a quick leap Kaneena cut through the mob and seized the man about the waist. It reminded Cook of a storekeeper and a sack of flour. In two strides Kaneena was at the rail. In another motion the man was gone, arching out and away from the ship. Without waiting to watch while the Hawaiian hit the water with a resounding smack and torrential splash, Kaneena turned away and headed back toward Cook. Those in the crowd who



had been able to see sent a wild laugh across the deck.

"Lolo," Kaneena said, "idiot. I am not chief on his part of the island, but when he comes to Kealakekua he should know I tell him what to do."

The other chief, Pareea, nodded. "We keep order for Lono."

Cook, thinking Lono was probably the king of all Hawaii, asked the two chiefs if the king were expected. They answered that the king, Kalaniopuu, would come, but exactly when they did not know. Cook asked no more about Lono.

Later Kaneena and Pareea ushered a third dignitary on board the *Resolution*. With ceremony they introduced him to Cook. Koa, they said his name was, high priest of the temple. Strangely out of place between the tall chiefs, Koa was small and bent. His eyes were red-rimmed and his skin was scaly. Beside Kaneena and Pareea he looked to be of another and lesser race. That they paid him respect but did not bow down, treating him rather as an equal, was a matter that Cook pondered.

Koa launched into a long speech of welcome, reverence, and almost instruction. Cook accepted it without pleasure, but knowing that it would help his stay to have friends ashore.

From Atooiie, Koa said, speaking in a rhythm and pitch that made it difficult for Cook to understand, had come canoes with word of the two ships and of their visit there the previous winter. The people of Atooiie had described the English well, saying that "they came in islands, forests that move on the sea, as the gods had said they would. And the men with Lono were white, with skin over their skin and doors in their sides. Into these doors they thrust their hands and took out great riches and many wonders. They are gods, for fire and smoke breathe from their mouths, and their weapons are lightning and thunder."

There again was Lono, Cook thought, but now it was himself they talked about. He had no chance to ask. His officers and men were watching, and Koa was bent on making ceremony. On and on went the chant, rising to a pitch and cadence that hid most of its meaning to Cook.

Suddenly it ended. Koa was silent for an instant. Then turning to his followers he seized a red, paper-like cloth and swept it about Cook's shoulders. After pausing again, apparently to admire the effect, he stepped back a few paces and, with the air of a magician, produced a small pig and presented it to Cook.

The chant began again, and as he chanted Koa swung slowly around to face the massed Hawaiians who watched. He seemed almost to weave a spell over them. It ended with a suck of breath and words that Cook thought said, "All pay homage. Even chiefs bow low. Lono has returned."

Cook was not sure, but for an instant he thought he saw an expression of doubt, perhaps even of anger, cross the face of Kaneena.

Cook invited Koa to eat with him in the captain's cabin. All went well, even the salt beef and hard biscuits. Wine and rum Koa drank with obvious awe and little desire for more. Throughout, it seemed to Cook that Koa was making too much of his visit, treating Cook with nagging reverence while acting scornful of chief and commoner because he, Koa, possessed Cook. So long as Koa, the priest, made Cook no enemies among the warrior chiefs, all was well.

In the evening Koa invited the white alii ashore. With his first officer, Mr. King, and several others, Cook gathered up a boat crew and went, hoping the formalities would end soon and the business of provisioning and exploring begin.

At the beach four Hawaiians met the boat with prostrate bows. Rising, the four marched ahead of Koa and Cook, waving wands tipped with dog's hair and chanting endlessly. Over and over again Cook heard the word, "Lono . . . Lono . . . Lono."

The crowds on the shore melted inland at the sound, and the few Hawaiians the procession passed in its progress along the beach threw themselves down, faces to the ground, at the sight of Cook and at the words of the priest.

Cook was becoming uneasy. This was foolishness and a waste of time. He was a ship's captain, not a god. He was used to dealing with chiefs; but this priest was a different sort of problem.

The wand bearers led them to a clearing where a massive stone marae stretched away from the shore. This was the temple, the heeiau the Hawaiians called it. About forty yards long and twenty broad, it was a mesa of well-laid stones rising high above the ground.

At the entrance two tall manlike images leered down at them with distorted faces. Between them a tall black-bearded Hawaiian halted the procession while he introduced his gods to Captain Cook. Then, following Koa and the bearded priest, they moved toward a semicircle of wooden figures huddled at the foot of five tall poles. A platform above the half-circle bore a well-rotted pig; under it were bits of sugar cane, coconuts, plantains, and sweet potatoes.

Cook's dislike of the whole affair grew almost beyond bearing when Koa led him beneath the platform and offered him the rancid pig as though bestowing honors. But just as Cook was on the point of cutting Koa short, the priest dropped the pig and led the way up a flimsy ladder to the platform top.

From there Cook could see a crowd of Hawaiians watching

silently from below the heeiau walls. While priests made loud obeisance, the common people made nothing at all. Nowhere could he see men who bore the look of chiefs.

At the entrance near the two wooden idols another procession had begun. Ten men marched slowly toward the platform, carrying a large red cloth and, to Cook's relief, a pig that was fresh enough to struggle.

Koa wrapped Cook in the red cloth, presented him with the new pig, and launched into another long chant. He intoned in hideous harmony with the bearded priest, broken by passages in Koa's piping solo. It lasted a very long time.

More and more uncomfortable and harassed, Cook fought for balance on the dilapidated scaffold and held his tongue until at last the chant ended and he could descend from his tottering throne. By now he had a feeling that he was being used by Koa to gain power. His suspicions grew when the feast began.

Quite literally, food was fed to the English by the Hawaiians. Pareea was detailed by Koa to feed Lieutenant King. Koa himself sat down next to Cook and began to chew coconut and roast pig. When he removed the pulpy morsels from his mouth and began to thrust them into Cook's, Cook had had enough. As quickly as he could make bows and ceremony he rose, distributed gifts of iron, and led his officers from the heeiau. All the way back to the boats wand bearers walked ahead and again scattered the villagers with cries of "Lono, Lono!" And all the way back along the beach and out to the ship Cook wondered about the ritual at the heeiau.

From the nineteenth of January to the twenty-fourth, with the observatory already set up on shore, ship's work was the main order of activity. Calkers worked along the seams; the

rigging was overhauled; hogs were brought aboard and salted. The bay was continually in motion. Canoes came and went in swarms. Islanders crowded the ships until the crews were cramped at their work.

But on January 24 Cook and his men woke to find Kealakekua Bay silent. Not a single canoe broke the sparkle of its waters. In the light of the rising sun its beaches lay deserted. Slowly an air of tension settled over the ships. When Cook sent boat parties ashore to investigate, they reported back that the Hawaiians had left the bay.

Not until after noon did they receive word from shore that the king, Kalaniopuu, was approaching and had sent word that the bay was kapu, forbidden, to all except himself and his party. For a day and a half the English remained alone on the bay, watched, they knew, from the slopes and bluffs and trees behind the beaches.

Into this stillness on the following afternoon came two canoes. To those who watched from the ships it seemed as though the sounds of the paddles could be heard across the breadth of the bay. It was Kalaniopuu. Quietly, with a lack of ceremony that was out of tune with Koa's rituals, an old, gray-haired man visited the two ships with his queen and his two sons. Dressed only in a tapa waistcloth, he greeted Cook as an equal, not as a god. He spoke calmly of welcome. The next day, he said, he would visit Cook again. With that the old man climbed slowly into his canoe and left.

The following noon Kalaniopuu kept his word. Three large canoes were worked into the water at the north shore. Except for the men launching the canoes and taking their places at the paddles, the beach was deserted. Cook examined the scene through the glass for a full minute. Then he turned and ordered

his finest uniform laid out, his sword polished and buckled to its belt, and gifts of knives and iron axes brought up from below.

The men in the lead canoe—Kalaniopuu and his chiefs—wore cloaks of feathers that gleamed gold and red in the sun. On their heads were crested helmets, built high with a crest of feathers, and in their hands were long ceremonial daggers and longer spears. In the second canoe were an ancient priest, his wand bearers, and gigantic idols with eyes of oyster shell, teeth of dog fangs. And the third canoe was loaded to its gunwales with hogs and vegetables.

The three canoes, paddled in rhythm to the chants of the priests, swung slowly in a circle around the ships. Kalaniopuu stood motionless on his platform. He seemed taller than he had the evening before, older than time and just as powerful.

Instead of coming alongside, the canoes swung past the *Resolution's* bow and moved in toward shore. Knowing this to be an invitation, Cook hurriedly called together his officers and made for shore. What followed was a feast of gargantuan proportions—hog roasted in hot stones, coconut puddings, plantains, taro root baked in the ground, and sugar cane. Kalaniopuu opened the ceremonies by throwing his gleaming feather cloak over Cook's shoulders, placing his feather helmet on Cook's head, and spreading before him five or six more cloaks of startling beauty and workmanship. Then in simple words he and Cook performed the ceremony of friendship; they exchanged names, becoming one in Polynesian symbol.

When the feast ended Cook invited Kalaniopuu to the ship and returned the honors as best he could with ship's fare. About the old king's shoulders he placed a fine linen shirt, and about the heavy waist he buckled his own belt and sword. Never in

all his voyages had Cook been received so well as he had been here.

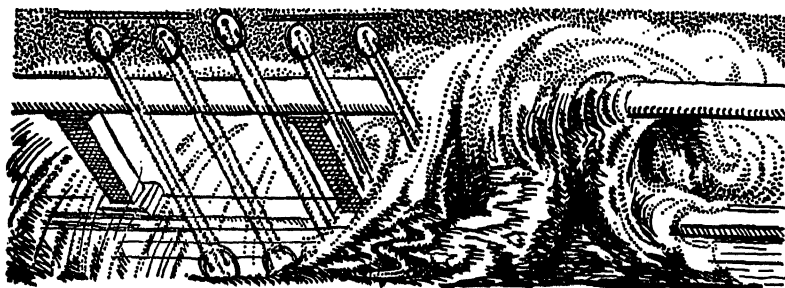
The kindness of the Hawaiians remained unchanged. Trade for food continued until the ships were almost fully stocked. Cook began to notice, however, that most of the hogs were smaller now and came from the priests rather than from the chiefs and common people. He also watched while Hawaiians, friendly still and laughing, patted fattened English stomachs and made remarks about how much they must have eaten to put on so much weight while at Kealakekua.

When Kalaniopuu finally asked Cook when he planned to leave, Cook knew it was time to answer and to go. The king said he wanted to know so that a proper farewell could be planned, but his relief was obvious when Cook told him they would leave soon to visit the other islands and then sail away to the north.

On February 3, the day before departure, Cook was presented with the most magnificent gift he had received anywhere on his voyages. The ground within an entire compound was covered with bolts of tapa cloth. A large barnlike shelter was filled with vegetables, and a herd of pigs was held in a stockade.

Except for those small portions to which his chiefs were entitled by custom, Kalaniopuu explained, everything was for the white visitors.

At the departure itself a thousand canoes swarmed the bay, and many thousand Hawaiians chanted in pleasant grief as the ships swung to the wind. In this atmosphere of contentment, with the ships stocked to the last, bursting cask and hold; in this welter of love and sad farewells, Cook sailed his ships out of Kealakekua Bay.



## XXVII. *The Death of Lono*

For two and a half days the two ships coasted north in fair weather. Suddenly, deep in the night, a gale thundered over them. It came with such speed and built to such fury that the ships were driven over, rail under. In a matter of moments seas crashed green over their bows.

The *Resolution* bucked and groaned, rising over the crests and plunging into troughs. "Mr. Bligh," Cook roared above the wind, "get all hands topside. Heave to! Double lash the deck cargo. Take in sail and double stop."

Cook could hear nothing but the sea and the wind and the crash of the ship in the waves. But he could see the men run from lifeline to lifeline on deck and struggle aloft into the darkness of the careening shrouds. The gale was no stronger, no more dangerous, than many the ships had weathered, but he knew that each storm left rigging, timbers, fastenings, bottom plates, and spars a little less sturdy than the last. It was safest to heave to.

A faint cry came from aloft and flew astern with the wind. It was relayed down by men lower in the rigging. The foremast shrouds were slacking. Before Bligh could give an order, the ship, poised with her bow to the sky, plunged into the trough



and brought up with a shuddering crash. Above the din Cook heard the sound he had been fearing. Sharp in the gale, there was a crack like a pistol shot.

When dawn came and the wind died, the damage was examined. The foremast had sprung its supports and was in danger of carrying away entirely. They must put in to a harbor, unstep the mast, and make repairs. Cook swung his ships around and sailed them slowly south.

Less than a week after they had left in a tumult of farewells, the *Resolution* and *Discovery* sailed back into Kealakekua Bay. It was deserted. No canoes came to meet them. No visitors brought food and laughter and confusion to their decks. On shore an occasional native moved across the beach. There was no welcome.

The ships were kapu. For two days they waited. Then Kalaniopuu returned and again presented gifts and lifted the kapu. Trade began again and there seemed no reason to worry.

Toward evening on February 13 Cook ordered out the pinace and headed for shore to inspect the observatory set up near the heeiau. He was met at the water's edge by Lieutenant King.

"Captain," King said, "there's been some trouble. The *Discovery's* watering party had some natives helping to roll their casks from the well to the boat when three or four chiefs came up and ordered them off. They were rough about it. When our men protested there was a good deal of excitement. The chiefs threatened to attack with stones. They didn't calm down until I arrived with an armed marine."

Cook didn't like the sound of it. The incident was over, and perhaps it hadn't amounted to much, but it was the first hint

of violence. He told King to arm his observatory guard and to order the marines to change their musket loads from shot to ball. "Fire at anyone who attacks with stones," he said, "but warn them first. Try not to kill."

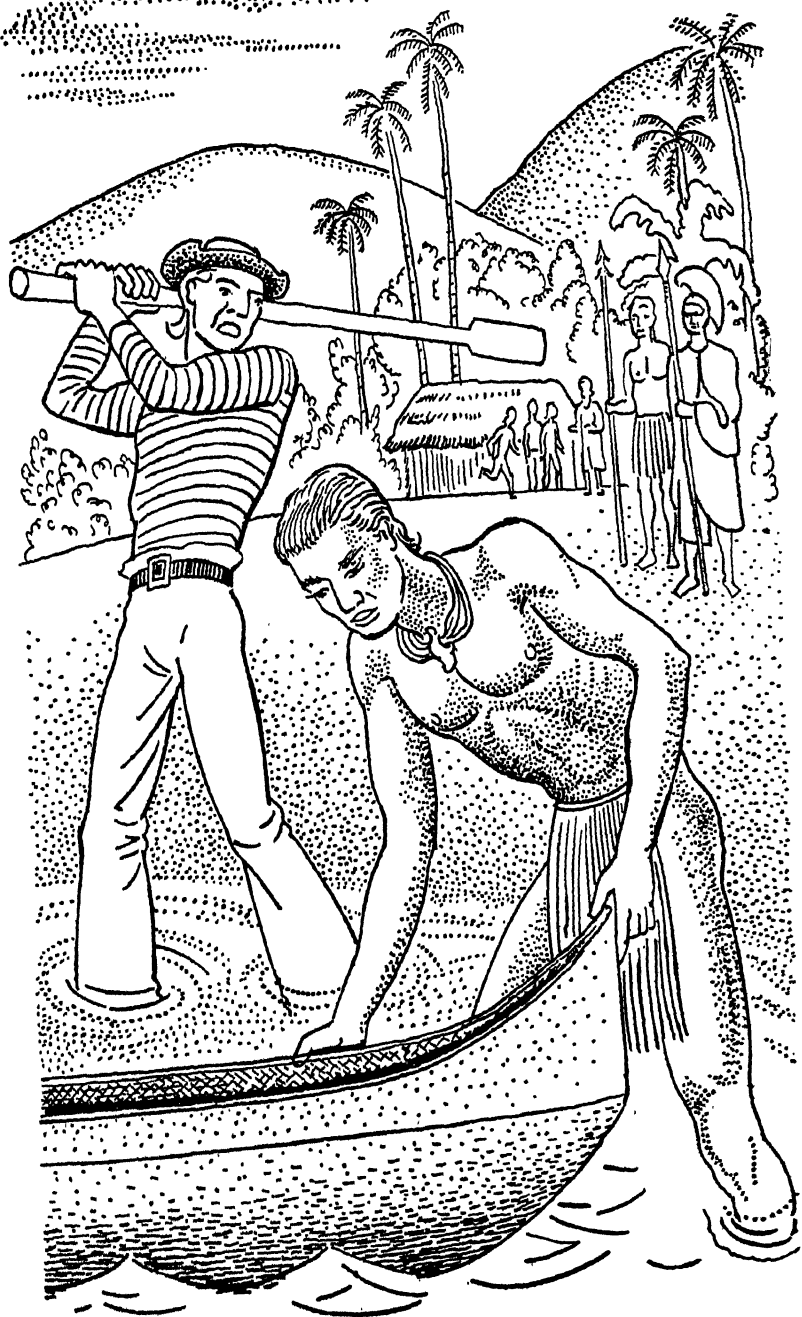
As Cook and King entered the observatory tent musket shots rippled across the bay from the *Discovery*. The firing continued as they raced toward the open beach. From there they could see two Hawaiians paddling a canoe furiously toward shore, pursued by a ship's boat.

"Mr. King," Cook said, "call your corporal and follow me. We'll try to catch them when they beach their canoe." He ran off down the beach.

They were too late. The canoe was half out of the water, and the two Hawaiians had vanished among the inland trees. Calling to King to follow him with the marine, Cook set out to search the surrounding villages. They were led on a chase that brought them nothing but darkness three miles from the tents.

Drawn inland by the thieves, Cook and King missed the scene that followed their departure. They heard of it when they returned late that night.

The master of the *Discovery*, Mr. Edgar, sent in pursuit of the canoe Cook and King had seen, was returning to his ship, having recovered the stolen articles, when he saw Cook and King give chase into the jungle. Edgar, thinking to help, turned his boat and headed back for the beach. By the time he got there Cook and King had disappeared. Apparently unable to think of anything else to do, he decided to seize the canoe left by the thieves. Just then Pareea—Cook's friend from the first day at Kealakekua—arrived from the *Discovery*. A crowd of Hawaiians was already milling about the beach. Pareea said



the canoe was his. He had come to get it back. He asked Edgar to release it. Edgar, surrounded by his boat crew, refused.

Ignoring him, Pareea walked to his canoe and bent to slide it into the water. A sailor swung an oar from behind and struck the chief a vicious blow on the head. Slowly Pareea sank to his knees.

For an instant there was silence. The Hawaiians stared at their chief. He struggled to his feet, swayed a moment, and then charged the sailor who had struck him. Again the oar swung for a blow, but this time Pareea saw it coming. He caught the heavy sweep in mid-air and jerked it from the sailor's grasp. Then, turning toward Edgar, Pareea broke the oar across his knee and flung the pieces to the sand.

The Hawaiians charged, shouting as they came. The English, outnumbered, fled into the water and made their way to a reef of rocks. The Hawaiians turned to the pinnacle and began to demolish it.

It was Pareea who stopped them. He ordered them away, retrieved the remaining oars, and sent the grateful English back to the *Discovery*. What passed through the minds of Edgar and his men was never set down. Whatever they thought of themselves it must have rankled when, as they rowed slowly toward their ship, Pareea caught up with them in his canoe, returned a midshipman's hat that had been lost in the fight, and said, "Kapene Kukay—Lono—will he kill me for what I have done?"

Edgar summoned his tongue to say, no, Cook would not blame his friend Pareea. The chief said no more. Solemnly he touched noses with the English officers and paddled slowly away toward the northern point.

Just after dark, Kaneena, Pareea's friend, came on board the

*Discovery* carrying a huge, trussed hog. He said he wanted to trade the hog for a knife as long as his arm.

Cook and Lieutenant King returned to a harbor that was as quiet as death. When he heard what had happened Cook felt an anger more violent than any he had felt since his first ship had been rammed at her mooring. He was older now and he said little, his fury contained in years of command.

Nothing could be done until morning. Then, he knew, he must show the Hawaiians that they had not won a victory and try to show that they had not lost a friendship. It would be difficult at best, especially since his own men had made the matter far worse than the petty theft that had started it.

When he awoke early the next morning a boat from the *Discovery* had just arrived with the news that Captain Clerke's cutter had been stolen from her boom during the night. This was no petty theft. Men's lives depended on the cutter when a ship was in danger.

Cook immediately ordered the marines to arm. He called out the boats of both ships and gathered his officers to explain his plan. As he talked he loaded one barrel of his musket with powder only, the other with ball.

"It matters little where the blame lies—and at best it is divided evenly among ourselves and the islanders—we must stay here until the mast is repaired. We must, therefore, show the Hawaiians that we will tolerate neither theft nor attack, that they have won no advantage. The cutter must be returned by them, not retrieved by us.

"Boats from both ships will patrol the mouth of the bay and prevent any canoe from either entering or leaving. I will take

the pinnacle, an armed crew, and nine marines. The launch will follow me. Mr. King will take the small boat. I shall go direct to Kalaniopuu and bring him on board. Here he shall stay until his people return the cutter.

"If possible," Cook went on, "there is to be no force of arms. We need the Hawaiians as friends, and they have been good to us. To this end Mr. King will proceed to the huts of the priests and explain why we are armed and what we intend. He will tell them we mean to harm no one but that we want the cutter returned."

Then, detailing each boat to its station, Cook led his party ashore. In the village where Kalaniopuu was making his headquarters the Hawaiians seemed to have forgotten the previous day's fight. As Cook walked between their huts they prostrated themselves as usual and presented him with offerings of small pigs. The day was becoming warm and still.

When Cook asked for Kalaniopuu, the king's two sons appeared and led him to a long hut where the old man was seated, taking his morning meal. He greeted Cook with a pleasure that changed to surprise as Cook told him of the theft.

After a short talk Cook, convinced that Kalaniopuu knew nothing of the theft, invited the old chief to spend the day on board the *Resolution*. Kalaniopuu accepted. He rose to go at once. His two sons ran on ahead.

The king called to his retainers and then started toward the beach. Cook noticed that a gathering crowd was following slowly. Men, women, and children seemed to appear from nowhere to watch their king and the white chief some called Lono.

They were leaving the village when gunfire echoed across

the water. At the southern tip of the harbor two large canoes were suddenly hidden by splashes and then could be seen to turn toward shore with a ship's boat in pursuit. A murmur went through the crowd.

Cook and Kalaniopuu reached the beach not far from the pinnace. The crowd behind them was silent now, almost tense. Suddenly a woman's wail broke the quiet, and Kalaniopuu's old queen burst through the crowd and threw herself on the sand before him. With a flood of tears she begged the king not to leave the shore.

Cook could understand enough through the sobs to guess what the queen was saying. He was sure of it when two chiefs came running up and forced their king to sit down. They were alarmed by the firing and afraid for Kalaniopuu, they said. He must not go on board the white men's ship.

Calmly, then, Cook spoke to the king. "When men of different tongues and lives meet they do not always come to know each other easily, not so well as you and I, who have given each other our names in friendship. Your people have stolen from mine, and now my people have attacked some of your people. What can we say? You and I are friends. We can show how it is to understand. Come to my ship and we shall feast together. Then all our people shall see how it is."

Kalaniopuu's face held nothing now except dejection and indecision. He half rose to go with Cook, then sat heavily while his two chiefs and the old woman, his queen, urged him to stay. He looked little like the commanding king who had worn a red and gold cloak and helmet as he led his war canoes around Cook's ships.

There was a stir in the throng. Cook looked up to see the

women and children sifting back through the men and vanishing among the trees. Warriors carrying spears and clubs and wearing woven mats came running from the village.

The marines, until now pressed close by the crowd, moved off thirty yards to where there was room to use their arms.

Cook said to the officer nearest him, "The alarm has spread. It would be difficult to take the king to the ship without bloodshed. Get the men into the boats." He turned away from Kaniopuu.

He was walking toward the pinnace, keeping his strides slow and even, when he heard the crowd cry out. The white men in the boats had killed a chief. Suddenly a Hawaiian, a block of lava in one hand and an iron spike in the other, crouched in front of Cook, and threatened to attack.

What happened then happened quickly, and no two men agreed exactly on the details. Cook held his ground and warned the Hawaiian off. The warrior made a move to rush in. Cook raised his double-barreled musket and fired the blank charge. The explosion and burst of smoke and flame halted the man for a moment only.

Then the violence began in earnest. Stones were thrown at the marines. One of the lesser chiefs leaped at the boat officer with an English knife. Cook held up a hand to hold off the fire of the marines. Then, taking careful aim, he fired his other barrel at the chief who was attacking the boat officer. The man dropped and lay still.

The Hawaiians held back for an instant, then a barrage of stones flew at the English. At last the marines fired. The Hawaiians left their dead where they fell and charged in a shouting mass. Four of the marines were swarmed under at once. There was no time to reload. Standing at the water's edge, Cook



faced the Hawaiians. For a moment they fell back. Then he turned away to signal the boats to cease fire and pull in near shore. As he lifted his arm he was stabbed from behind. A knife of English iron entered his neck. Captain Cook fell face down at the edge of the sea.

Many Hawaiians shared in the death. It is said that they passed the blade from hand to hand, dividing the honor in so noble a victim. And all the Hawaiians shared in grief for their deed. They gave him the funeral of an alii. The fire burned on the hill where they took him. And when, weeping, they returned his bones to his ship, they carried them wrapped in the finest of tapa.

Cook died on the scene of discovery. He had lived long enough to earn honors, but not long enough to receive all he had earned. He died across the world from England.

On the foreign island of Hawaii, at the water's edge on the northern beach of Kealakekua Bay, there is a plot of land a few yards square, paved in stone, like a heeiau. It marks the spot where Captain Cook fell. Those few square yards are English territory.

After they buried their captain in his sea, Clerke gave orders to sail. The voyage continued.



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